

FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

THE HAUNT OF



NO. 23



\$1²⁵

FEAR[®]

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

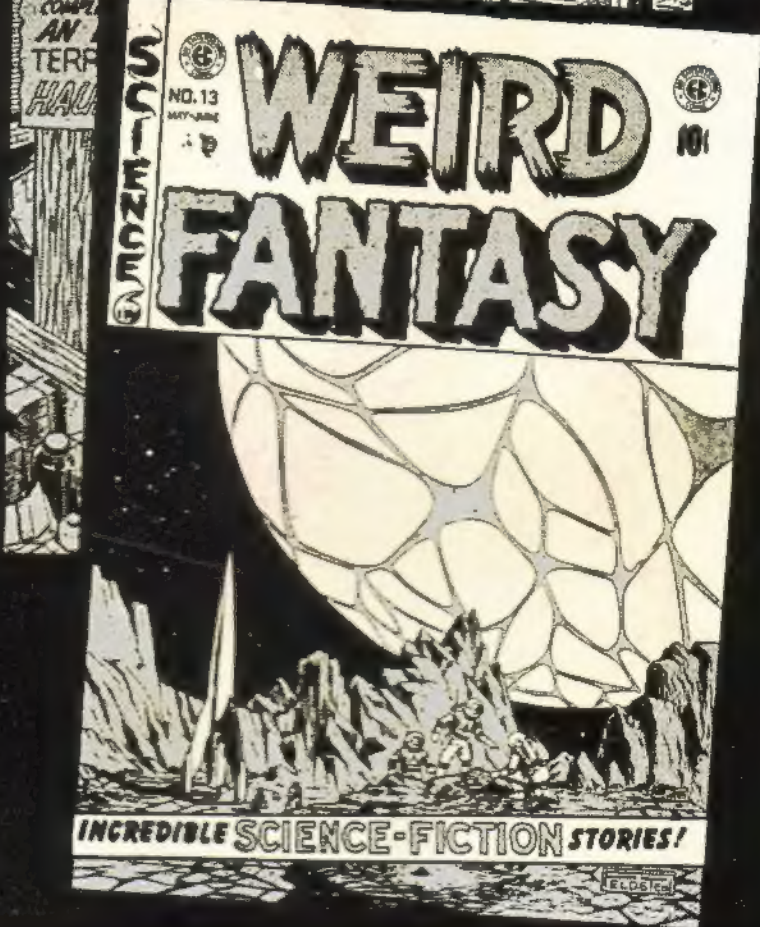
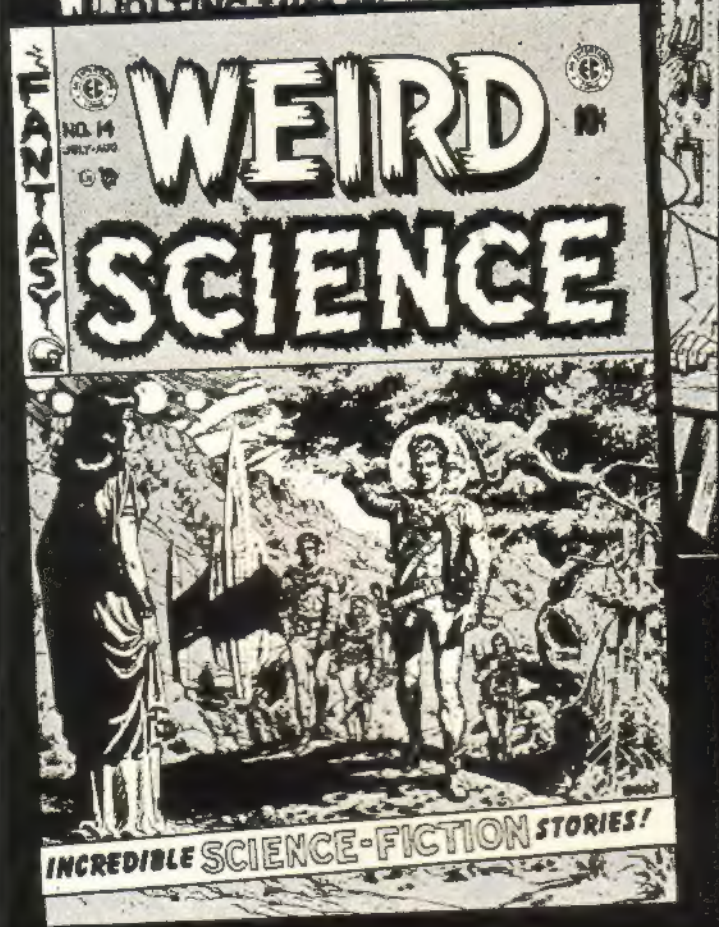
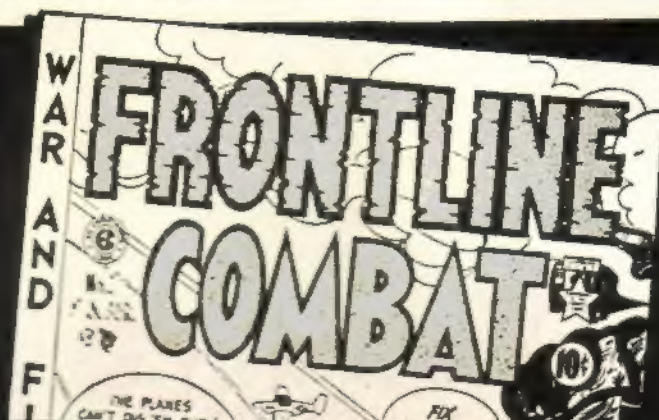


GHASTLY

IF YOU LIKE THE TALES IN THIS MAGAZINE ...



**BE SURE TO READ THE LATEST EXCITING YARNS ALWAYS
FOUND IN THESE OTHER "NEW TREND" E-C COMICS!**



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SO YOU GOT YOUR GRIMY PAWS ONE ONE OF YOUR OLD MAN'S DIMES, BOUGHT MY MUCK-MAG, AND NOW YOU'RE HUNGRY FOR ANOTHER SLIME-SERVING FROM MY CAULDRON HERE IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR, EH? WELL, TUCK YOUR DROOL CUPS UNDER YOUR DOUBLE CHINS, KNOT YOUR NAPKINS AROUND YOUR NUBBY NECKS, AND YOUR DELIRIUM DIETICIAN, YOUR REEKING-RESTAURATEUR, YOUR MORBID-MENU-MAKER, THE OLD WITCH, WILL DISH OUT ANOTHER OF HER REVOLTING RECIPES. READY? GOOD! THEN HERE GOES WITH THE NAUSEATING NOVELETTE I CALL...

CREEP COURSE



STELLA'S FURNISHED ROOM WASN'T VERY FAR FROM THE UNIVERSITY. IN FACT, FROM HER FRONT WINDOW, SHE COULD SEE THE TOWER OF MEMORIAL HALL RISING ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS. SHE'D HURRIED THE FEW BLOCKS FROM THE CAMPUS, FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR, TOSSED HER BOOKS ON A CHAIR, AND NOW SHE STOOD GAZING OUT OVER THE COLLEGE TOWN AND SMILING A TRIUMPHANT SMILE...

'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION'! YOU'RE ONE COURSE I WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANY MORE!



STELLA TURNED AND GRINNED AT HER REFLECTION IN THE FULL-LENGTH MIRROR ON THE CLOSET DOOR. SHE EYED HER BALLERINA SHOES, HER FULL SKIRT, HER TIGHT-FITTING SWEATER, AND SHE SHOOK HER HEAD...



UH-UH! NO SIR! THIS OUTFIT IS OKAY FOR PERKING A PROF'S INTEREST DURING THE DAY, BUT NOW THAT I'VE BEEN INVITED TO AN EVENING SESSION...

STELLA SWUNG OPEN THE CLOSET AND UNHOOKED HER VERY BEST STRAPLESS FROM THE RACK...



...IT'S TIME TO ROLL OUT THE BIG GUNS! HI, STELLA. SAY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

IT WAS MITZI, STELLA'S ROOMMATE. SHE CROSSED THE SMALL ROOM AND FINGERED THE EVENING GOWN



GOT A HEAVY DATE TONIGHT, MITZI! IT ISN'T A BLIND DATE, I HOPE. I WOULDN'T FOOL AROUND WITH ANY BLIND DATE THESE DAYS!

STELLA SCOFFED...

OH, CUT IT, MITZI. SO A FEW STUDENTS DISAPPEAR FROM THE CAMPUS. IS THAT ANY REASON TO START UGLY RUMORS ABOUT MANIACS AND MURDERERS AND STUFF LIKE THAT?!



I DIDN'T START THE RUMORS, STELLA. I'M JUST REPEATING WHAT I HEARD. WHO'S THE GUY?

WELL...IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO TELL! IT'S... PROFESSOR FINLEY!

PROFESSOR FINLEY!? THE 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' TEACHER?! ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND? WHY HE'S AN OLD CREEP!



HE MAY BE AN OLD CREEP, MITZ, BUT IF I DON'T PASS 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION', I DON'T GRADUATE. AND WHAT I KNOW ABOUT ANCIENT CIVILIZATION WOULDN'T FILL A THIMBLE.



OH, I GET IT! GONNA VAMP 'IM, EH?

GONNA TRY! DON'T FORGET! NOT A WORD! I PROMISED HIM I WOULDN'T TELL A SOUL.

WELL, HAVE FUN, STELLA. I GOTTA RUN. THE GANG'S OVER AT MORREY'S. WE'RE GONNA HAVE A JAM SESSION. DON'T WORRY! YOUR SECRET'S SAFE WITH ME...



MITZI LEFT AND STELLA STRETCHED OUT ON THE BED. SHE SMILED IMPISHLY...



POOR PROFESSOR FINLEY! IF HE ONLY KNEW WHAT HE WAS LETTING HIMSELF IN FOR!

IT WAS GOING TO BE SO SIMPLE. STELLA'D PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY. EVER SINCE THAT FIRST WEEK... WHEN THEY'D COVERED EGYPTIAN CULTURE AND SHE'D KNOWN SHE'D NEVER BE ABLE TO PASS THAT COURSE, WHAT WITH GREECE AND ROME YET TO COME... SHE'D WORKED ON PROFESSOR FINLEY. AND THIS AFTERNOON, SHE'D FINALLY SUCCEEDED...

OH, ER, MISS SHARP. I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU AFTER MY LECTURE.

OF COURSE, PROFESSOR.



SHE'D BEEN SO CAREFUL ABOUT HER MAKE-UP. SHE'D WORN HER MOST FLATTERING SWEATERS. SHE'D SAT CROSS-LEGGED IN CLASS TILL HER MUSCLES HAD ACHED. AND HE'D FINALLY BITTEN...

I...I'M A LITTLE WORRIED MYSELF, PROFESSOR. I'VE TRIED! HONESTLY, I'VE TRIED! BUT I JUST HAVEN'T UNDERSTOOD...

I THOUGHT I'D MADE THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS QUITE CLEAR, MISS SHARP. I FEEL TERRIBLE. HAVE I COVERED TOO MUCH GROUND TOO FAST FOR YOU?

PERHAPS... IF YOU REVIEWED IT FOR ME, PROFESSOR... SAY... SOME EVENING?

THAT... ER... THAT WOULD BE HIGHLY IRREGULAR, MISS SHARP! THE FACULTY FROWNS ON FRATERNIZATION...

YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, PROFESSOR?

LAST NIGHT I READ YOUR PAPER ON THE 'FALL OF ROME,' MISS SHARP. FRANKLY, I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HOW MUCH YOU'VE GRASPED FROM MY LECTURES!



OH! I... I SEE! WELL... I... I WOULDN'T WANT TO GET YOU INTO ANY KIND OF TROUBLE...

ER... PERHAPS... IF NO ONE KNEW... IF IT WAS... SAY... OUR LITTLE SECRET... I MEAN... WELL... I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU, MISS SHARP! YOU'RE A... VERY NICE... ER... AH... GIRL... COUGH...



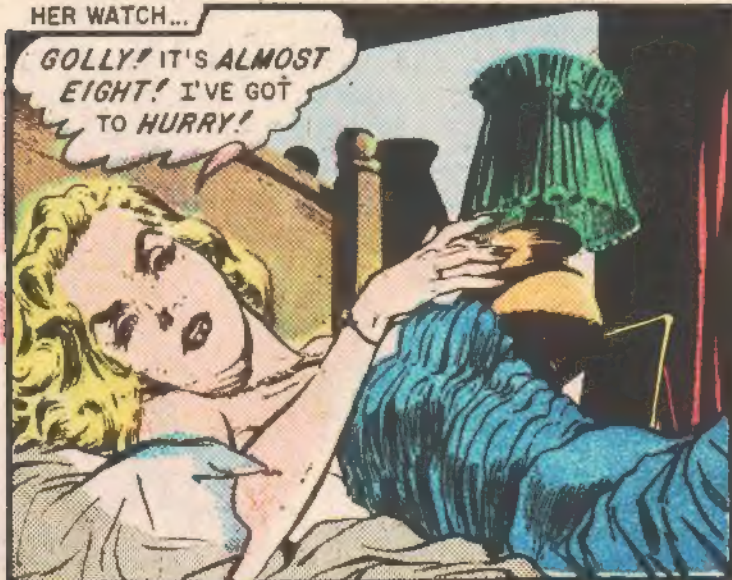
HE'D BITTEN, ALL RIGHT. HE'D SUCKED IN THE BAIT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...

OH, I WOULDN'T TELL A SOUL PROFESSOR. NOT A SOUL! THIS IS SO SWEET OF YOU! I... I COULD KISS YOU...

AHEM... YES... ER... WELL THEN, SHALL WE SAY... TONIGHT... AT EIGHT... AT MY HOUSE? YOU'LL... ER... MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT SEEN!

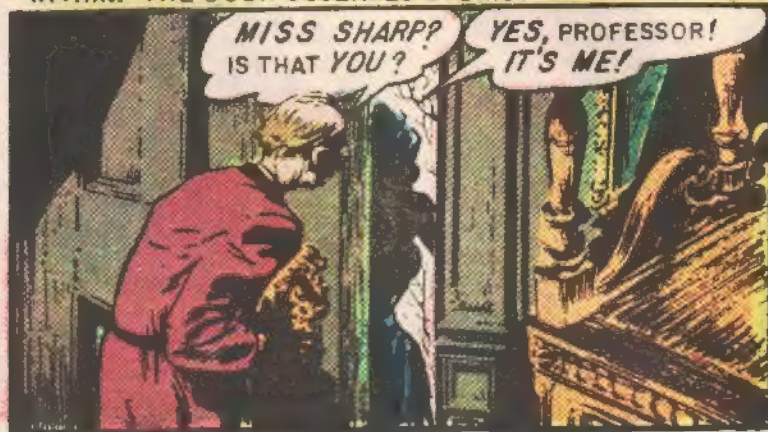


STELLA YAWNED AND STRETCHED. SHE LOOKED AT HER WATCH...



GOLLY! IT'S ALMOST EIGHT! I'VE GOT TO HURRY!

PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WAS ONE OF THOSE OLD FASHIONED MONSTROSITIES THAT HAD ONCE BEEN VERY STYLISH. STELLA LIFTED THE HUGE DOOR KNOCKER. THE HOLLOW BOOM ECHOED DOWN LONG CORRIDORS AND UP STEEP STAIRCASES AND DIED AWAY IN DARK CORNERS WITHIN. THE DOOR SQUEAKED OPEN...



MISS SHARP? IS THAT YOU?

YES, PROFESSOR! IT'S ME!

STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR, MOVING LITHELY, TRYING TO LOOK VERY DESIRABLE...



WHY, MISS SHARP? YOU'RE ALL DRESSED UP!

OH, THIS?! IT'S JUST A LITTLE SOMETHING I PICKED UP FOR COCKTAILS! LIKE IT?

SHE WATCHED HIS BEADY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES. 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' WAS ONE COURSE SHE WASN'T GOING TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT...



IT'S...IT'S A VERY NICE GOWN, MISS SHARP. YOU... YOU LOOK VERY LOVELY!

CALL ME STELLA, PROFESSOR!

ALL RIGHT...ER... STELLA. COME... COME INTO THE LIBRARY!

OH, WHAT A LOVELY HOUSE! EVERYTHING IS SO...SO... INTERESTING!



STELLA HID HER *REAL* FEELINGS. THE *INSIDE* OF THE HOUSE WAS WORSE THAN THE *OUTSIDE*. THERE WERE STATUES WHEREVER ONE LOOKED... MARBLE BUSTS OF ROMAN EMPERORS... FULL LENGTH POSES OF MIGHTY ROMAN WARRIORS... ROMAN POETS, WRITERS, MATHEMATICIANS. COLUMNS LINED THE WALLS, BETWEEN WHICH WERE HUNG PAINTINGS OF ANCIENT ROMAN SCENES.



DO YOU FIND IT INTERESTING, MISS...ER... STELLA? COME! I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING REALLY INTERESTING...

PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A SMALL DOOR AT THE END OF THE HALL. HE MOTIONED STELLA DOWN THE STEPS...

IT'S IN THE CELLAR! COME...

THE CELLAR?! LORD! WHAT I WON'T DO TO GRADUATE!



STELLA DESCENDED THE STEPS SLOWLY, THINKING TO HERSELF...

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS THROW MY ARMS AROUND HIM AND KISS HIM AND HE'S A DEAD DUCK! HE WON'T DARE FLUNK ME. POOR PROFESSOR FINLEY!

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED ROMAN CULTURE, STELLA!



AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS WAS ANOTHER DOOR... A MASSIVE OAK DOOR...

OPEN IT, STELLA!

SURE, PROFESSOR!



STELLA OPENED IT. PROFESSOR FINLEY PUSHED. STELLA SPRAWLED THROUGH...

PROFESSOR!

HEH, HEH, HEH!



THE DOOR SLAMMED SHUT BEHIND STELLA. THE LOCK SNAPPED. PROFESSOR FINLEY'S MANIACAL LAUGH ECHOED THROUGH...

PROFESSOR. MY GOD! WHAT IS THIS! LET ME OUT!

HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH!



FOOTSTEPS FADED AWAY UP THE CELLAR STAIRS. STELLA SCREAMED AFTER THEM. SUDDENLY, STELLA'S BLOOD FROZE. SHE HEARD THE LOW-THROATED GROWL...

WHO... WHO'S THERE?

HE'S GOT ANOTHER ONE!

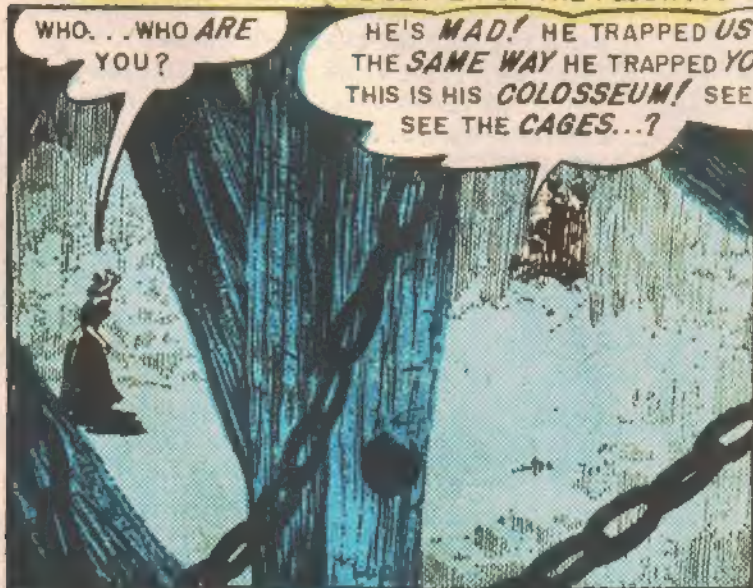
YOU POOR KID!



STELLA PEERED INTO THE GLOOM. SHE SEEMED TO BE IN SOME SORT OF HUGE ROOM. THERE WERE OTHER FIGURES HUDDLED TOGETHER IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR...

WHO... WHO ARE YOU?

HE'S MAD! HE TRAPPED US THE SAME WAY HE TRAPPED YOU! THIS IS HIS COLOSSEUM! SEE? SEE THE CAGES...?



AT THE OTHER END OF THE CAVERNOUS CELLAR CHAMBER, STELLA COULD SEE THE BARS... AND BEHIND THEM, THE BURNING YELLOW EYES AND THE GLEAMING TEETH...

HE'S GOT A LION BACK THERE... AND A TIGER...

...A GORILLA! WE'RE TO BE HIS 'CHRISTIAN MARTYRS'!

OH, NO! NO!



STELLA'S EYES WERE BECOMING ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARKNESS NOW. SHE COULD SEE THE OTHERS... YOUNG GIRLS LIKE HERSELF... SHIVERING IN THE DARK DAMPNES. SHE RECOGNIZED THEM. THEY WERE STUDENTS... THE STUDENTS THAT HAD DISAPPEARED...



PROFESSOR FINLEY ENTERED A DRAPED BOX. HE HAD DISCARDED HIS DRESSING GOWN AND NOW STOOD PROUDLY IN A WHITE ROMAN TOGA, A WREATH OF LAUREL ON HIS HEAD...



STELLA AND THE OTHER GIRLS HUDDLED TOGETHER, WHIMPERING, AS THE MAD MAN RAISED HIS WINE GLASS...



SUDDENLY THE CELLAR REVERBERATED WITH A RECORDED TRUMPET FANFARE. THE LIGHTS WENT ON. STELLA BLINKED. THE SAND FLOOR OF THE CELLAR WAS STAINED RED. IN THEIR CAGES, THE ANIMALS ROARED, BROOLING HUNGRILY...



BEHIND HIS SCREENED BOX, PROFESSOR FINLEY PRESSED A BUTTON... THEN ANOTHER. STELLA SCREAMED. THE BARS OF THE CAGES ROLLED OPEN...



THE LION SNARLED. THE TIGER PADDED TOWARD THEM. THE GORILLA POUNDED HIS CHEST, WADDLING OUT OF HIS CAGE. THE CELLAR RESOUNDED WITH THE HYSTERICAL SHRIEKINGS OF THE HELPLESS GIRLS...



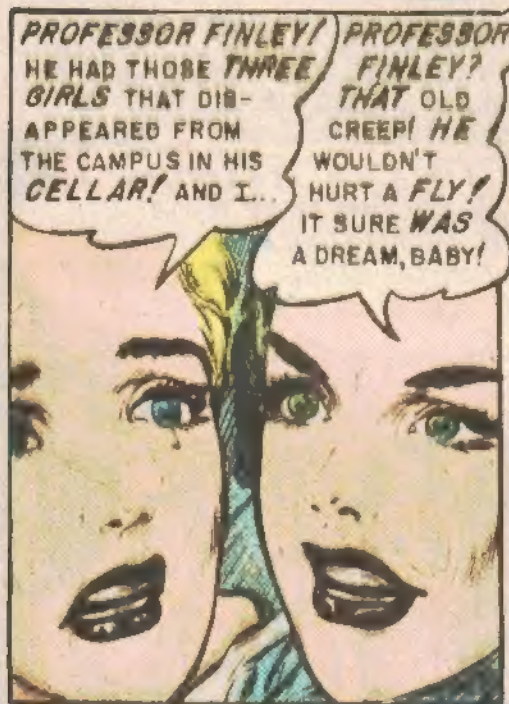
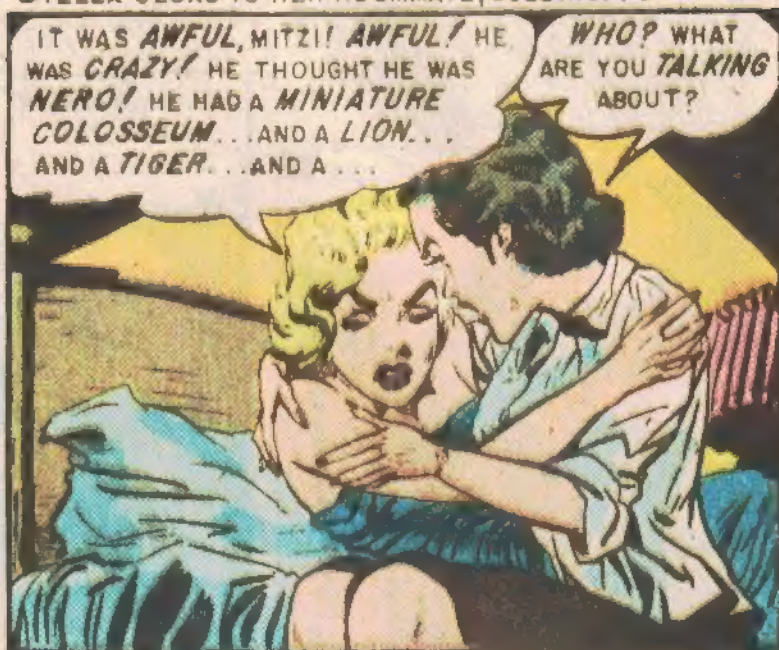
AND AS THE SHRIEKS AND SCREAMS ROSE TO A CRESCENDO, HARMONIZING IN A HORROR SYMPHONY WITH THE ROARS OF THE BLOOD-STARVED BEASTS, THE MANIAC MUNCED GRAPES AND STRUMMED HIS LYRE AND WATCHED THE RIPPING... THE TEARING... THE VERY DEATH SCENE HIS MANIACAL COUNTERPART HAD WATCHED NINETEEN CENTURIES AGO...



STELLA SCREAMED. MITZI SHOOK HER AGAIN.
STELLA SAT UP, WIDE-EYED...



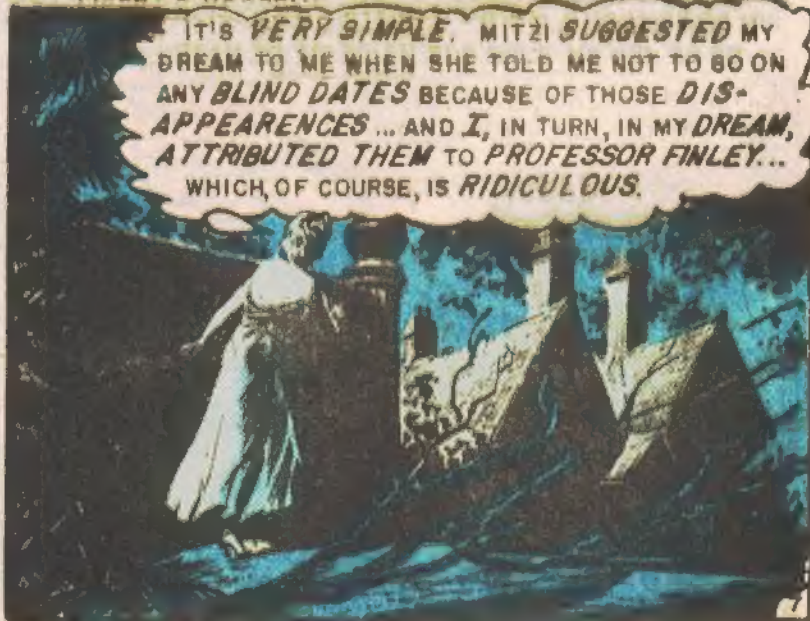
STELLA CLUNG TO HER ROOMMATE, SOBBING...



STELLA LEAPED FROM THE BED...



SHE HURRIED DOWN DARK STREETS TO PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE...



PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WASN'T AT ALL AS STELLA HAD DREAMED IT. THERE WAS NO DOORKNOCKER. INSTEAD, SOFT CHIMES SANG FROM WITHIN AS SHE TOUCHED THE BUTTON...



MISS SHARP!
IS THAT YOU?

YES,
PROFESSOR!
IT'S ME!

STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR. THIS WAS NO DREAM NOW! THIS WAS IT!



WHY, MISS SHARP!
YOU'RE ALL
DRESSED UP!

OH, THIS?!
IT'S JUST A
LITTLE SOME-
THING I PICKED
UP FOR COCKTAILS!
LIKE IT!

SHE WATCHED HIS BEADY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES, 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' WAS ONE COURSE...



COME WITH ME,
MISS SHARP! WE'LL
GET STARTED...

CALL ME
STELLA,
PROFESSOR!

PROFESSOR FINLEY LED STELLA DOWN A LONG HALL TO A HUGE DOOR. HE SWUNG IT OPEN...



WELL, THANK GOODNESS, PROFESSOR!
I WOULD HAVE DIED IF I SAW
ANY ROMAN STATUES OR
PAINTINGS OR THE LIKE...

OH, NO, MISS SHARP...
ER... STELLA! ROMAN
CIVILIZATION NEVER
REALLY INTERESTED
ME...

THE LOCK SNAPPED BEHIND THEM. STELLA LOOKED AROUND, RELIEVED. THE WALLS BORE WEIRD INSCRIPTIONS AND STRANGE DRAWINGS. AT ONE END OF THE ROOM STOOD THREE... THREE... STELLA GASPED...



MUMMY CASES!
THREE OF
THEM!

YES, STELLA! EGYPTIAN
CULTURE IS MY FORTE! I
AM PARTICULARLY INTERESTED
IN THE BURIAL PRACTICES OF
THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS...

STELLA BACKED OFF. PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A CABINET AND DREW FORTH AN EGYPTIAN PRIEST'S MANTLE. HE DROPPED HIS ROBE, PLACED THE MANTLE ON HIS HEAD, AND CAME TOWARD HER... THE YARDS AND YARDS OF BURIAL GAUZE TRAILING BEHIND HIM...



IT'S AN INTERESTING PROCESS,
STELLA... MUMMIFICATION...

NO! NO!
CHOKE...

HEE, HEE! WELL, KIDDIES, THAT ABOUT WRAPS IT UP... FOR STELLA, THAT IS. PROFESSOR FINLEY HAS FOUR MUMMY CASES NOW, AND THERE ARE FOUR GIRLS MISSING FROM THE CAMPUS. STRANGE THING ABOUT 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' STUDENTS. THEY EITHER FLUNK OUT, DROP OUT, OR... HEE, HEE... DIE OUT. NOW, THE VAULT-KEEPER AWAITS WITH HIS GORY STORY! I'LL SEE YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER OF



MY GRIM FAIRY
TALES, INCIDENT-
TALLY, IF YOU
HAVEN'T JOINED
THE E.C. FAN-
ADDICT CLUB...
WHY FIGHT IT? IT'S
BIGGER THAN BOTH
OF US! DIG YOU
LATER!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! NOW IT'S MY TURN TO SHIVER YOUR TIMBERS. YEP, IT'S YOUR HOST IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO PRESENT ANOTHER PIECE OF PUTRID PROSE FROM MY CREEPY COLLECTION OF TERROR-TOMES. THIS SCREAM-SELECTION OUGHT TO CHILL YOUR WATERY BLOOD! I CALL IT...

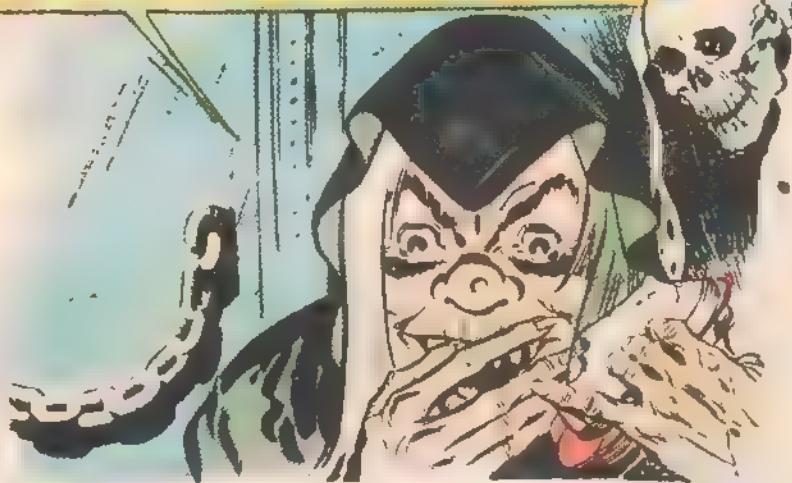
NO SILVER ATOLL!

WHEN WE BOARDED THE TRANS-PACIFIC AIRLINER IN SAN FRANCISCO, CLARK AND I WERE PERFECT STRANGERS. HE CHOSE THE SEAT BESIDE ME AND WE BEGAN TO TALK. BY HAWAII, WE WERE FRIENDS. BY WAKE ISLAND, WE WERE MORE THAN FRIENDS. BY GUAM, I WAS IN LOVE AND KNEW IT. AND WHEN THE ENGINE CAUGHT FIRE SOMEWHERE SOUTH-EAST OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE ONLY TERROR, THE ONLY FEAR I HAD... WAS NOW THAT I'D FOUND CLARK, I WAS GOING TO LOSE HIM...

CLARK! LOOK!
THAT ENGINE!
FLAMES!

GOOD
LORD!
THE
PLANE'S
ON FIRE!

ATTENTION ALL
PASSENGERS!
FASTEN YOUR SEAT
BELTS! FASTEN YOUR
SEAT BELTS! WE'RE
GOING DOWN...



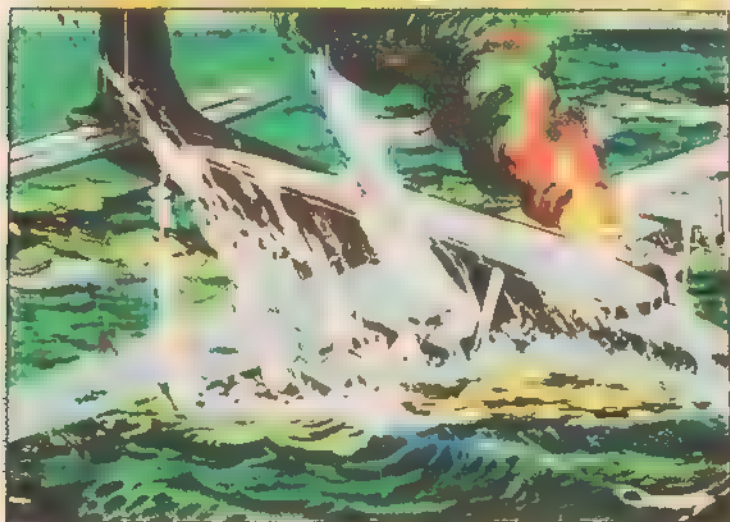
I REMEMBER THE STEWARDESS STUMBLING UP AND DOWN THE AISLE, COMFORTING US, REASSURING US, AND THE SCREAMING WHINE OF THE WIND OUTSIDE MIXING WITH THE SHRIEKS OF THE PASSENGERS INSIDE AS OUR PLANE DOVE SEAWARD. AND I REMEMBER HOW I TOOK CLARK'S HAND AND HELD IT TO MY TREMBLING LIPS...

D-DARLING! I-I'M
F-FRIGHTENED...

EVERYTHING WILL BE
ALL RIGHT, RUTH!
YOU'LL SEE...



THE PACIFIC CAME UP TO MEET US, BLUE AND VAST AND ROLLING, AND THE MOMENTS BEFORE WE HIT WERE ETERNITIES, THEN, THE SUDDEN SHOCK! THE SPRAY EXPLODING UPWARD AROUND US! THE HISSING OF THE FLAMING ENGINE AS THE SEA WATER ENVELOPED IT

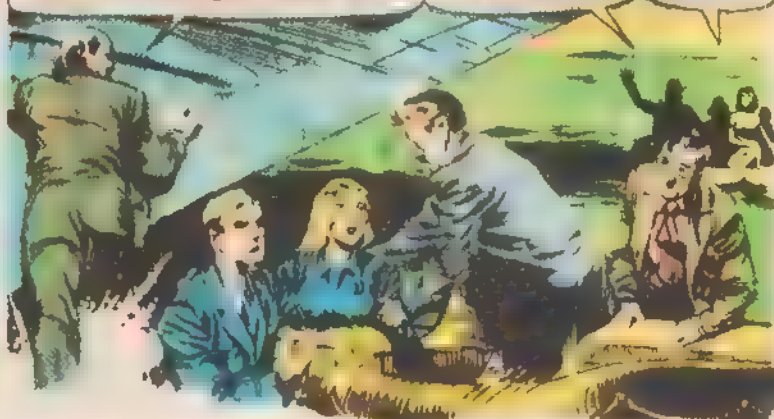


THEN, THE UTTER SCREAMING CONFUSION, AS WE REALIZED WE WERE SINKING. SOMEONE OPENED THE ESCAPE HATCH AND WE POURED OUT ONTO THE WING. MISS KIRBY, THE STEWARDESS, REMEMBERED TO SALVAGE THE MEDICAL KIT, AND THE PILOT, CAPTAIN MILLER, MANAGED TO INFLATE TWO LIFE RAFTS

QUICKLY! GET INTO THE RAFTS. SHE'S SINKING FAST

LOOK, CAPTAIN MILLER! LAND!

AN ISLAND!



THE PLANE WENT DOWN NOSE FIRST IN A MATTER OF MINUTES. I SHUDDERED AS I WATCHED THE TAIL SECTION SINK SLOWLY BENEATH THE CHOPPY PACIFIC

HOURS LATER, WE PULLED OUR RAFTS UP ON A SPUME-LINED SLIMY SHORE. FOUL-SMELLING DRIFTWOOD AND REEKING SEAWEED COVERED THE NARROW STEAMING BEACH...

AFTER WE'D CLEARED A CAMPSITE, CAPTAIN MILLER CALLED US ALL TOGETHER.

WHAT ISLAND IS THAT, CAPTAIN?

I DON'T KNOW! THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF ISLANDS IN THIS AREA... MANY UNCHARTED!

I THOUGHT THESE PACIFIC ATOLLS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE LITTLE PARADISES...

ONLY IN TRAVEL FOLDERS

NOW, I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE'RE GOING TO BE HERE... IT MAY BE A WEEK... IT MAY BE SIX MONTHS. EVENTUALLY, WE'LL BE RESCUED. THIS IS NEAR THE SHIPPING LANES. IN ANYCASE, OUR SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON EVERYONE'S COOPERATION!

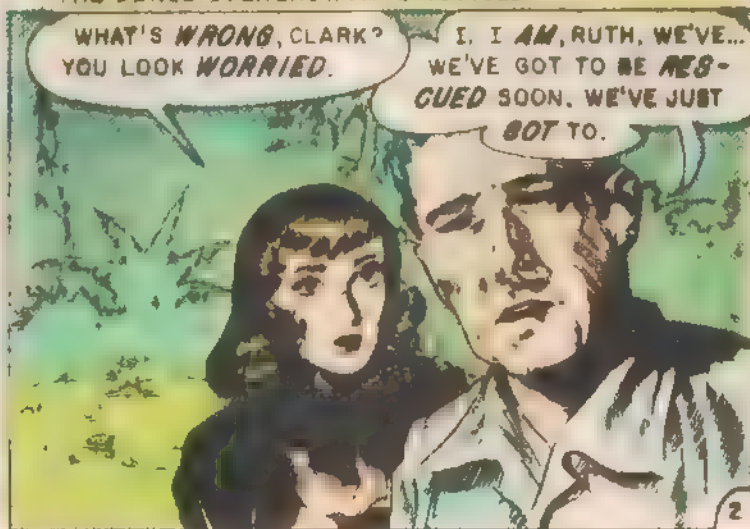


THERE IS PLENTY OF FRUIT GROWING ON THE ISLAND, AND PLENTY OF FISH IN THE LAGOON SO WE WON'T STARVE. WE'VE GOT ONE GUN, ONE BOX OF SHELLS, AND A MEDICAL KIT WITH ALL THE DRIFTWOOD AROUND, WE CAN BUILD A SIGNAL PYRE, AND IF A PLANE OR A SHIP COMES BY, WE'LL BE ABLE TO LIGHT IT TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. SO, ALL IN ALL, OUR SITUATION COULD BE A LOT WORSE

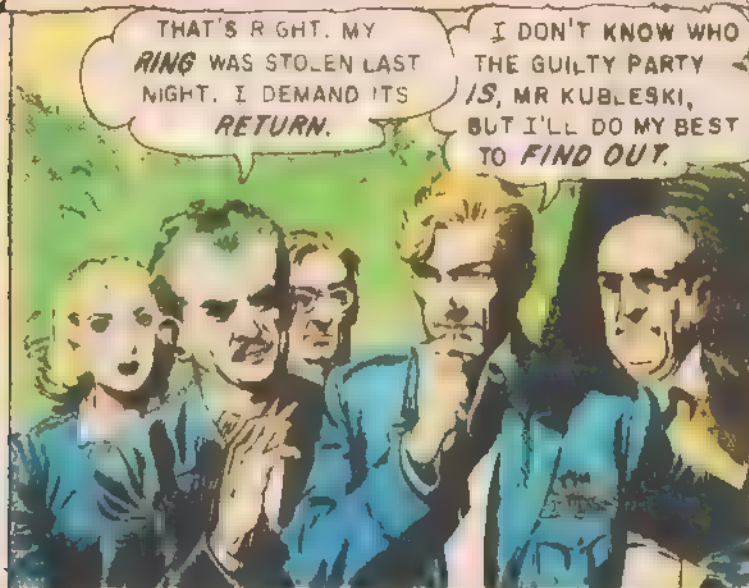
SO THERE WE WERE, ELEVEN HUMAN BEINGS MAROONED ON AN UNINHABITED TROPICAL ISLAND. THAT FIRST NIGHT, AS CLARK AND I SAT BESIDE EACH OTHER AND LISTENED TO THE SQUEALING TROPICAL BIRDS OFF IN THE DENSE OVERGROWTH I NOTICED

WHAT'S WRONG, CLARK? YOU LOOK WORRIED.

I, I AM, RUTH, WE'VE... WE'VE GOT TO BE RESCUED SOON. WE'VE JUST GOT TO.



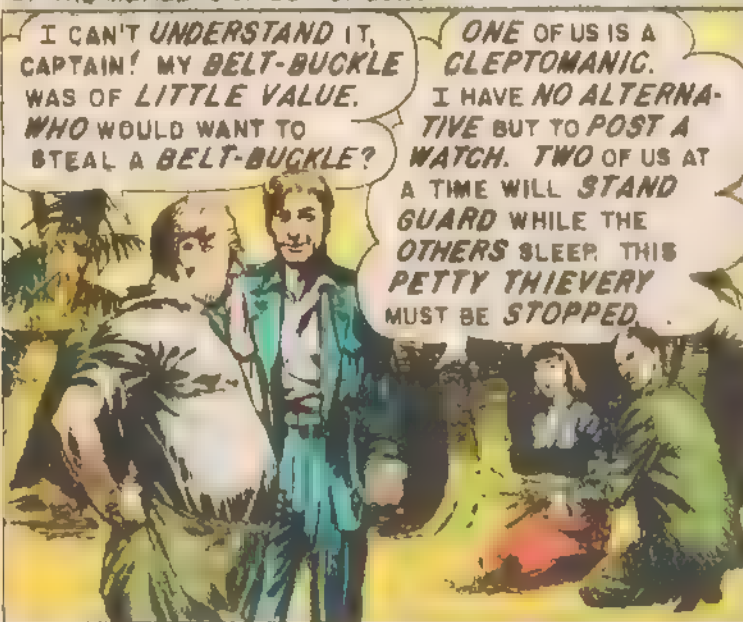
A WEEK WENT BY. NO PLANE OR SHIP CAME NEAR OUR ISLAND. AND STRANGE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN. **ONE OF OUR PARTY WAS A THIEF...**



THAT'S RIGHT. MY **RING** WAS STOLEN LAST NIGHT. I DEMAND ITS **RETURN**.

I DON'T KNOW WHO THE GUILTY PARTY IS, MR KUBLESKI, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST TO **FIND OUT**.

EVERY NIGHT, SOMETHING ELSE WAS STOLEN FROM ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF OUR GROUP...



I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, CAPTAIN! MY **BELT-BUCKLE** WAS OF **LITTLE VALUE**. WHO WOULD WANT TO STEAL A **BELT-BUCKLE**?

ONE OF US IS A CLEPTOMANIC. I HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO **POST A WATCH**. TWO OF US AT A TIME WILL **STAND GUARD** WHILE THE OTHERS SLEEP. THIS **PETTY THIEVERY** MUST BE **STOPPED**.

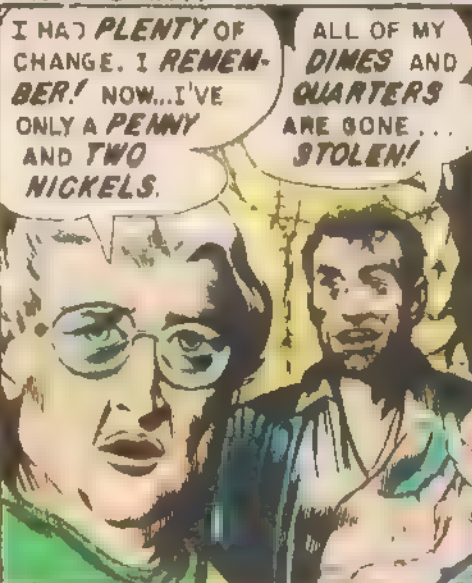
CAPTAIN MILLER FUMBLING THROUGH HIS POCKETS...



I'LL FLIP A COIN TO SEE WHO...WHO...**THAT'S FUNNY!** I WAS SURE I HAD SOME CHANGE. ANYBODY GOT A **QUARTER**?

I HAVE, CAPTAIN! I...I... **THAT'S STRANGE.**

ONE BY ONE, WE ALL SEARCHED OUR POCKETS AND PURSES. IT WAS INCREDIBLE...



I HAD **PLENTY** OF CHANGE. I **REMEMBER!** NOW...I'VE ONLY A **PENNY** AND TWO **NICKELS**.

ALL OF MY **DIMES** AND **QUARTERS** ARE GONE... **STOLEN!**

THE THIEF, WHOEVER HE OR SHE WAS, HAD RIFLED THROUGH EVERYONE'S CLOTHES...PROBABLY WHILE WE SLEPT. BUT THE CURIOUS THING WAS



HE'S ONLY TAKEN **DIMES** AND **QUARTERS** AND **HALF-DOLLARS!**

ALL MY **BILLS** ARE HERE. A **SILVER DOLLAR** I HAD IS GONE. MY **PENNIES** AND **NICKELS** ARE STILL HERE!

MISS KIRBY, THE STEWARDESS GASPED.



MR. DAWSON, WHAT WAS YOUR **BELT BUCKLE** MADE OF?

SILVER!

AND MY **RING!** MY **RING** WAS **SILVER, TOO!**

IT. IT SEEMS OUR **THIEF** IS ONLY INTERESTED IN STEALING **SILVER!** BUT **WHY?**

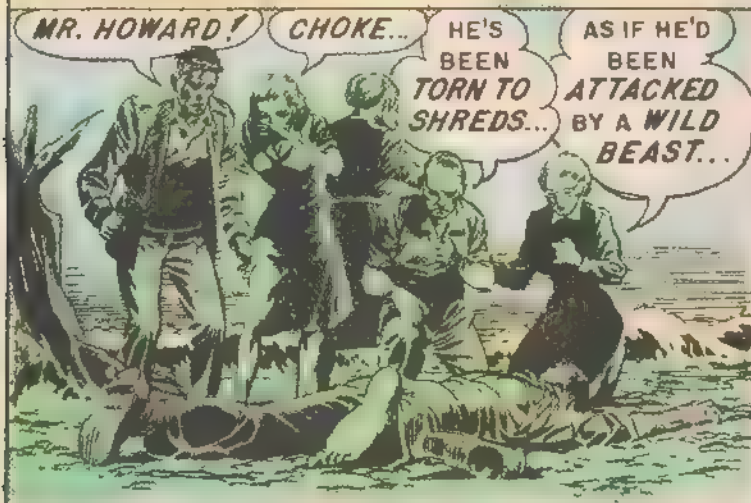
WE FOUND OUT WHY! ONE NIGHT AT THE END OF THE SECOND WEEK, I WAS AWAKENED TO THE BLOOD-CURDLING SOUND OF SOMEONE SHRIEKING IN PAIN.



YAAAAHHHHH!

GOOD LORD! WHAT WAS THAT?

THE SCREAM HAD AWAKENED THE WHOLE CAMP. IT HAD COME FROM UP THE BEACH. WE ALL SCRAMBLED TOWARD THE SPOT. THE MOON CAST AN EERIE GREENISH GLOW ON EVERYTHING. HE WAS LYING FACE DOWNWARD ON THE BLOOD-STAINED SAND...



MR. HOWARD!

CHOKER...

HE'S BEEN TORN TO SHREDS...

AS IF HE'D BEEN ATTACKED BY A WILD BEAST...

WE STARED AT EACH OTHER... ASHEN FACES IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT. CAPTAIN MILLER'S VOICE WAS COLD, EXPRESSIONLESS...

BUT THERE ARE NO WILD BEASTS ON THIS ISLAND! ONLY US...

THEN ONE OF US IS THE WILD BEAST!

MR. KUBLESKI! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

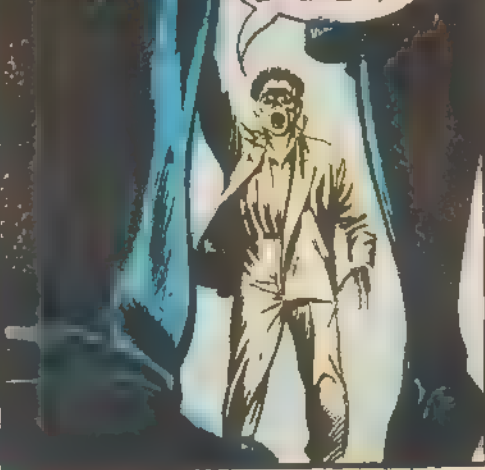


IN THE PORTION OF EUROPE WHERE I COME FROM, THERE IS A BELIEF THAT CERTAIN HUMAN BEINGS, WHEN THE MOON IS FULL, CRAVE THE FLESH OF OTHER HUMANS. WE CALL THEM WEREWOLVES!



YOU... YOU MEAN THAT ONE OF US IS A WERE-WOLF, MR. KUBLESKI?

...AND IT IS ALSO BELIEVED THAT THE ONLY WAY TO KILL A WEREWOLF IS TO SHOOT IT WITH A SILVER BULLET!



A SILVER... GOOD LORD!

THE MISSING COINS... THE RING... THE BELT-BUCKLE...

ALL SILVER!



I SHIVERED IN THE TROPICAL NIGHT. CLARK CAME UP BEHIND ME AND SLIPPED HIS ARM AROUND MY SHOULDER...

YOU MEAN THAT UNLESS WE CAN MANUFACTURE A SILVER BULLET, WE CANNOT KILL THIS... THIS THING, MR. KUBLESKI?

THAT IS CORRECT, CLARK. NO LEAD BULLET WILL KILL A WERE-WOLF! ONLY... SILVER...



I LOOKED AT THE FACES AROUND ME AS MR. KUBLESKI SPOKE. CAPTAIN MILLER... MR. DAWSON... MISS KIRBY... MR. ANSEN... MRS. AMES... MR. AMES... WHO WAS IT? WHO?

THE WEREWOLF KNEW HE... OR SHE... WAS IN TROUBLE WHEN WE CRASHED. HE KNEW THAT THE FULL MOON WOULD RISE WITHIN TWO WEEKS. HE KNEW HE WOULD HAVE TO STRIKE. SO, HE STOLE EVERYTHING MADE OF SILVER THAT WE HAD...

AND NOW, EVEN IF HIS IDENTITY IS LEARNED, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DESTROY HIM!



IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, I SCARCELY LEFT CLARK'S SIDE. I WAS FRIGHTENED AND HE WAS THE ONLY ONE I COULD TURN TO...



CLARK! NEXT WEEK IS THE **FULL MOON** AGAIN! WHAT WILL WE DO? WHAT IF IT **STRIKES** AGAIN!

I'LL PROTECT YOU, HONEY! **DON'T** WORRY!

AND THEN, IT HAPPENED AGAIN. FOUR WEEKS AFTER THE FIRST MURDER, ON THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON, A HORRIBLE SHRIEK ECHOED ACROSS OUR TROPIC ISLAND...



AND WHEN WE GOT TO MISS KIRBY'S LEAN-TO, WE FOUND HER PALE WHITE BODY TORN AND SHREDDED AND STREAKED RED WITH BLOOD...



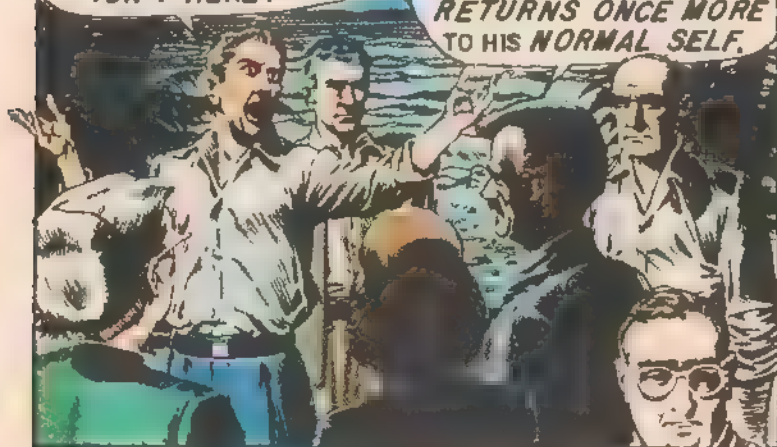
CHOKE...

THE **WEREWOLF** HAS STRUCK AGAIN!

CAPTAIN MILLER SHOUTED...

ALL RIGHT! WE'LL FIND OUT WHO IT IS! WHO'S MISSING? QUICKLY! LOOK AROUND! WHO ISN'T HERE?

DON'T BOTHER LOOKING, CAPTAIN! IT IS **TOO LATE!** ONCE THE WEREWOLF'S HUNGER FOR HUMAN FLESH IS **SATED**, HE RETURNS ONCE MORE TO HIS **NORMAL SELF**.



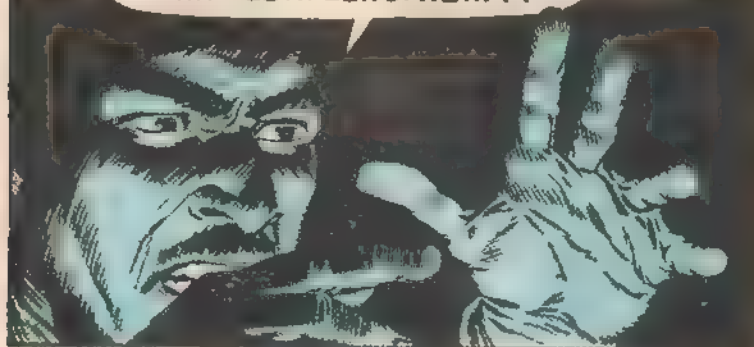
MR. KUBLESKI LOOKED AROUND...

HE IS NO DOUBT **RIGHT HERE** AMONG US AT THE **PRESENT** MOMENT!

ARE THERE ANY **TESTS**, MR. KUBLESKI... ANY WAYS OF TELLING WHO IS A **WEREWOLF**?



DURING THE PERIOD **PRECEEDING** THE RISE OF THE FULL MOON, THERE ARE VERY **FEW**, CLARK! WEREWOLVES ARE MORTALLY AFRAID OF **GARLIC**. IN THE **OLD COUNTRY**, MANY PEASANTS **STILL** HANG GARLIC ON THEIR DOORS AT FULL MOON TIME. AS THE FULL MOON **RISES**, THE WEREWOLVES EYES TURN **RED**. A **PENTAGRAM** IS SEEN ON THE **PALM** OF HIS **INTENDED VICTIM**. HIS EYEBROWS **MERGE**. . . HIS FACE GROWS **HAIRY**. . . HIS TEETH **LENGTHEN**. . .



AND THEN, AT **EXACTLY THE** MOMENT OF THE **FULL MOON**, THE **TRANSFORMATION** IS **COMPLETE**. HE IS, IN FACT, A VERITABLE **HUMAN WOLF**.

LORD! WHERE CAN WE GET ENOUGH **SILVER** TO FASHION A **SILVER BULLET**? WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY THIS **GOD-AWFUL** CREATURE...



WITH MISS KIRBY'S DEATH, I BECAME GUARDIAN OF THE MEDICAL KIT. ALTHOUGH MY TRAINING CONSISTED ONLY OF A SHORT NURSE'S AIDE COURSE DURING THE WAR, I NEVERTHELESS MANAGED TO PATCH UP THE VARIOUS CUTS AND BRUISES SUFFERED BY THE MEMBERS OF OUR PARTY. . .

DO YOU THINK A SHIP WILL *EVER* COME, CLARK?

I CERTAINLY *HOPE* SO, RUTH! I'M SO SICK OF *FISH AND FRUIT!*



ONE DAY I WAS WALKING DOWN ALONG THE BEACH WHEN I NOTICED A CRATE THAT HAD WASHED ASHORE. I READ THE FADED STENCIL MARKINGS. . .

'U.S. ARMY... QUARTERMASTER CORPS... FIELD RATIONS...'



I WAVED TO CLARK WHO WAS UP AT THE CAMP. . .

CLARK! COME HERE! QUICK!

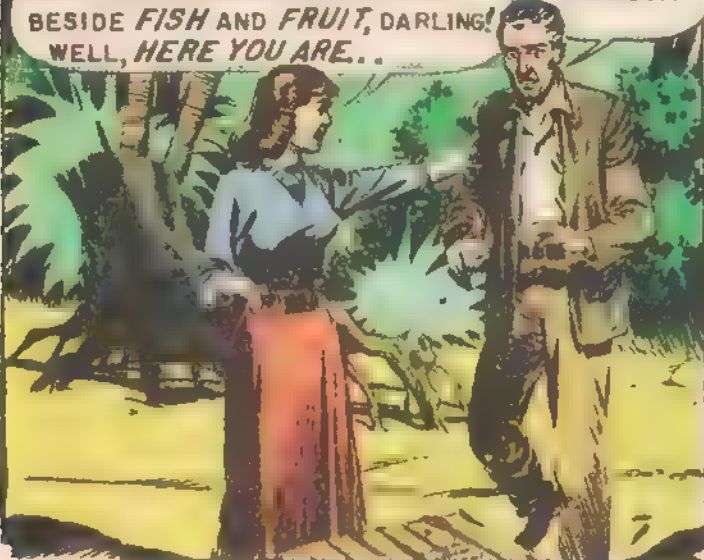
SURE THING, RUTH!



CLARK CAME ON THE RUN. I POINTED TO THE ROTTED CRATE. . . LAUGHING. . .

YOU *WANTED* SOMETHING ELSE BESIDE *FISH AND FRUIT*, DARLING! WELL, *HERE YOU ARE.*

CHOKES. . .



CLARK RECOILED IN HORROR. HE WALKED AWAY. . . MUTTERING. . .

..VERY FUNNY!

CLARK, HONEY! I WAS ONLY JOKING! PLEASE DON'T BE ANGRY. . .



HE WALKED ON UP TO CAMP, NEVER ONCE LOOKING BACK. I KICKED AT THE CRATE FURIOUSLY. . .

OH, *BLAST YOU!* WHY DID YOU PICK *THIS* BEACH TO WASH UP. . . ON. . . *GASP.*



THE ROTTED CRATE FELL APART. THE CANS ROLLED OUT OVER THE SAND. I PICKED ONE UP. THE STAMPED LETTERS DENOTING ITS CONTENTS WAS STILL LEGIBLE. . .

GOOD LORD! *CANNED SALAMI!* *SALAMI* HAS. . . *CHOKES*. . . *GARLIC* IN IT!



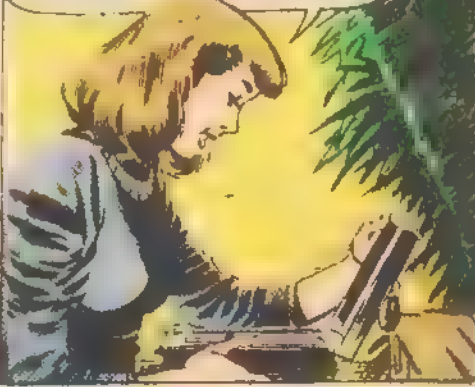
I DIDN'T WANT TO *BELIEVE* IT. I PRAYED I WAS *WRONG*. *CLARK... THE WEREWOLF!* HOW COULD IT BE? I *LOVED* CLARK, I WANTED TO *MARRY* HIM WHEN ALL THIS WAS OVER. I HAD TO BE *SURE*. I WENT BACK TO MY LEAN-TO

THERE'S A *CALENDAR* SOMEWHERE! I *KNOW* IT! I *SAW* IT! I...I. I *REMEMBER!* THE *MEDICAL KIT!*



I OPENED THE MEDICAL KIT. I STUDIED THE CALENDAR. TONIGHT TONIGHT WAS TO BE THE FULL MOON. I STARTED TO CLOSE THE MEDICAL KIT, WHEN SOMETHING CAUGHT MY EYE...

OF COURSE! HOW *STUPID* OF ME NOT TO HAVE *THOUGHT* OF THIS BEFORE!



THAT NIGHT I WENT TO CLARK'S LEAN-TO. HE LOOKED UP AT ME SADLY...

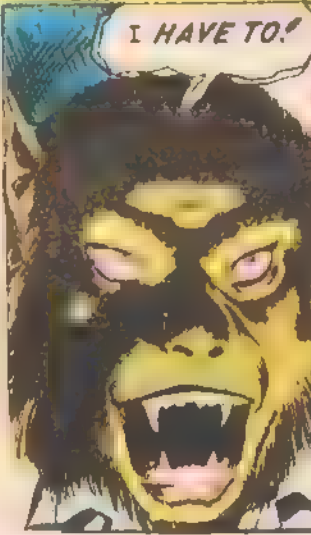
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO *FIND* OUT? WE COULD HAVE BEEN SO *HAPPY* TOGETHER! NOW... I *KNOW*, CLARK! LOOK! MY *PALM!* THE *PENTAGRAM!* YOU'RE GOING TO *KILL* ME!



THE MOONLIGHT STREAMED IN UPON HIS FACE AS HE CHANGED... AS HIS EYEBROWS MERGED...



...AS HIS EYES TURNED RED AND HIS TEETH LENGTHENED AND THE HAIR GREW OUT OF HIS FACE...



...AND HE SNARLED AND SPRANG AT ME, Slobbering..



...AND I PLUNGED THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLE INTO HIS CHEST...

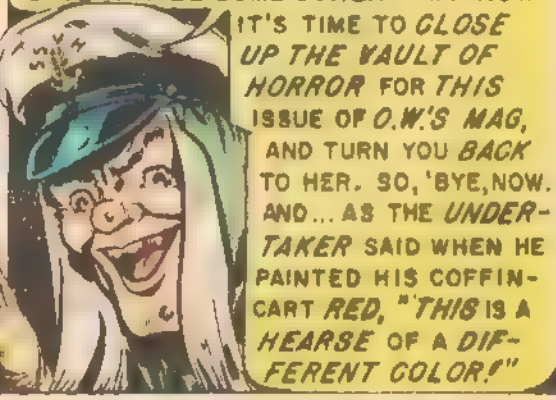


CAPTAIN MILLER CAME AND LOOKED AT CLARK'S DEAD BODY LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT AND THEN HE STARED AT ME QUESTIONINGLY AS I HANDED HIM THE EMPTY HYPODERMIC I'D FILLED WITH *SILVER NITRATE* FROM THE *BOTTLE* I'D FOUND IN THE *MEDICAL KIT*...

IT...IT *WORKED* SOB... LIKE A *SILVER BULLET!* YOU CAN TELL... SOB... MR. KUBLESKI!



HEH, HEH! THAT'S *RUTHY'S YARN*, KIDDIES, EXACTLY AS SHE TOLD IT TOME. HOW COME SHE *MET* ME, YOU ASK? SO *WHO* DO YOU THINK *RESCUED* HER AND THE OTHER CRUMBS? *NATCH!* ME! YOU SEE, I WAS TAKING A LITTLE *CRUISE* THIS SUMMER ON MY *GHOST SHIP* AND... WELL, THAT'S *ANOTHER* STORY! I'LL SAVE IT TILL SOME *OTHER* TIME. NOW



IT'S TIME TO *CLOSE* UP THE *VAULT* OF *HORROR* FOR THIS ISSUE OF *O.W.'S MAG*, AND TURN YOU *BACK* TO HER. SO, 'BYE, NOW. AND... AS THE *UNDER-TAKER* SAID WHEN HE PAINTED HIS COFFIN-CART *RED*, "THIS IS A *HEARSE* OF A *DIF-FERENT* COLOR!"

Graveyard Goodies

Whether you're new to E.C. or just one of the thousands already afflicted with E.C. fever, then the books and other goodies listed below will be of interest to you. Over the past 20 years dozens of publications and assorted memorabilia have been produced on and about E.C., but unfortunately most of them are not available anymore and fetch premium prices among collectors. The items listed here are all of high quality and deserve a place in the heart of any E.C. fan.

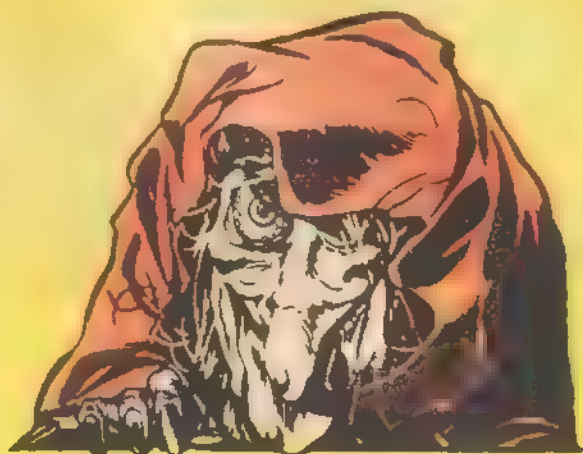


The E.C. HORROR LIBRARY

Over 200 pages of the best of E.C. sandwiched between two gorgeous blood red hardcovers. This FULL COLOR treasury stands 10"x14" and contains 23 complete E.C. classics. This showpiece includes such immortal stories as: "Squeeze Play" by Frank Frazetta, "Foul Play" by Jack Davis, "Midnight Mess" by Joe Orlando, "Horror We, How's Bayou?" by Graham Ingels, "Swamped" by Reed Crandall, and, in addition to the other 17 stories, you'll find an unpublished E.C. terror tale by Angelo Torres! A glorious landmark in the E.C. tradition. Price: \$19.95 plus 75¢ postage and handling.



THE MONSTER TIMES No. 10—A special E.C. issue. Originally published in May, 1972. Features interview with Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein as well as great articles on the E.C. convention, the TALES FROM THE CRYPT movie, the E.C. books themselves. Lots of illustrations and a 20"x15" color E.C. cover poster fold-out by Jack Davis. Only a few of these are available. Price: \$2.50 plus 25¢ postage and handling.



E.C. PORTFOLIOS

1

No. 1—If you ever wondered what the original art to those classic E.C. stories looked like, then you're in for a surprise! This series of art folios is just what the witch doctor ordered. All stories were photographed from the actual original art. You can rest in piece that every single brush stroke is there! The huge folio size and heavy bristol board present you with an unbeatable value. Bound within the rare first issue you have "Touch and Go" by Johnny Craig, "Food For Thought" by Al Williamson and Roy Krenkel, "Horror We, How's Bayou?" by Graham Ingels, plus "My World" by Wally Wood, cover art and more! Price: \$50.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured. Only a few left!

2

No. 2—This folio contains 6 all time E.C. classics. "Squeeze Play," "Air Burst," "Let's Play Poison," "Flying Machine," "Old Soldiers Never Die," and "Thunder Jet." The beautiful cover of this lavish folio is a FULL COLOR reproduction of Frazetta's unpublished version of the cover to WEIRD SCIENCE FANTASY No. 29! Price: \$25.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured.

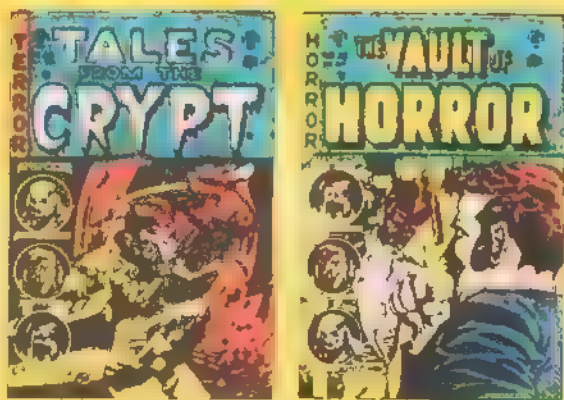
3

No. 3—Full Color covers. Beautifully reproduced. Inside you have Ingels' "With All the Trappings," Williamson's "50 Girls 50," Wood's "Mars is Heaven," "Ace" by Severin and "Spawn of Venus" by Feldstein. Price: \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured.

4

No. 4—Again you get nothing but the best! Featuring Ingels' "A Little Stranger" and "Chatterboxed," "Bellyful" by Krigstein, "By George" by Williamson, and "Man and Superman" by Kurtzman with 4 more colored covers. Price: \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured.

Graveyard Goodies



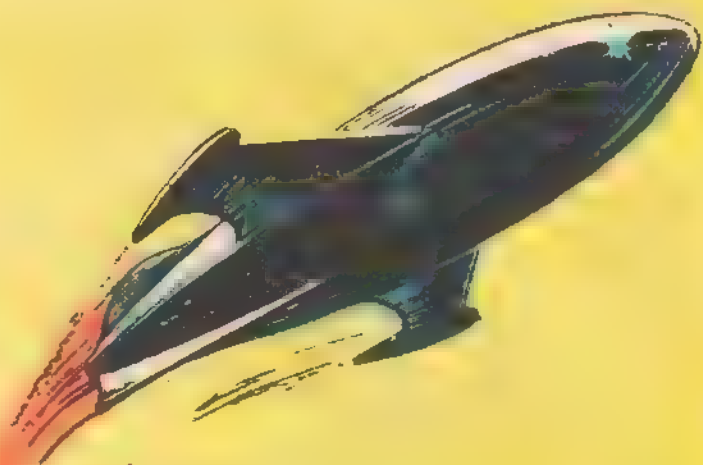
E.C. COVER POSTERS

Two different FULL COLOR posters of the uncensored covers from THE VAULT OF HORROR No. 32 by Johnny Craig and TALES FROM THE CRYPT No. 38 by Jack Davis. These gigantic (22' x 28') posters are an easy way of telling your friends that your reading isn't limited to Shakespeare and Freud. They fit just about any wall ... even jail cells! They come mailed in a tube. These posters were \$2.50 each, but now we can offer them to you for only \$1.00 each, but you must buy both! That's \$2.00 for both plus 50¢ for postage and handling.



E.C. T-SHIRT

Why not let everyone know that you're one of those frantic fans struck with E.C. fever? These classy white T-shirts come printed with a huge two color E.C. emblem! Just like the original E.C. (Entertaining Comics) symbol! Why not dump that soiled shroud you've been wearing and order one of these nice numbers. Comes in Small, Medium, Large, and Extra Large. Make sure you specify size when ordering. Price: \$3.00 plus 50¢ postage.



SQUA TRONT MAGAZINE

No. 2—The greatest of the E.C. fan magazines is once again available for all of you lunatics who lost out last time! Within this 52 page issue you'll find an article on E.C.'s war comics with some unpublished Kurtzman paintings; a 12 page folio of unpublished Williamson E.C. ink sketches; the original "Tiga" strips by Frazetta. Covers by Williamson and Crandall. More! Price: \$3.00 plus 25¢ postage

No. 3—Color covers by Feldstein and Crandall start off this issue. Featured within you'll uncover a 21 page article of E.C. science fiction; more unpublished Frazetta; E.C. death article; 7 pages of Crandall art; some unpublished "Flying Swifts" by George Evans; and more! 80 pages. Price: \$3.00 plus 25¢ postage

No. 4—100 page blockbuster issue! You actually get four full color covers by Harvey Kurtzman, Graham Ingels, Vaughn Bode, and Kenneth Smith. Inside this issue you'll take an indepth look at Harvey Kurtzman and unpublished art from his E.C., Humbug, and Playboy periods. More for the Frazetta collector; E.C. foreign comics; E.C. Club bulletins; art by Wrightson, Krenkel, Williamson, Corban, etc. PLUS two unpublished E.C. science fiction stories by Reed Crandall and Bernie Krigstein! There's more! Price: \$5.00 plus 25¢ postage.

Make all checks payable to East Coast Comix

Send for the above to your fast service ghouls at:

**GRAVEYARD
GOODIES
Box 21364
San Jose, Calif.
95151**

THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Before we get into the latest batch of drool letters from our feverish fans, there are a few points that need to be covered (with a few shovelfuls of dirt). First: we have made a few remarks in previous issues concerning the E.C. Fan-Addict Club revival. Naturally, we've received a wealth of mail in favor of our beginning a new E.C. Fan-Addict Club. We promised you news, but here it is our 10th reprint and STILL no news! What gives? ... you ask. Well, these things take time and planning and we just haven't finished yet. We find we're OK in the planning department, but we keep running out of time, what with a book a month. And you guys want a book a week? GOOD LORD! All we can say about the club now is to watch for news in future reprints. Second: our plans for another E.C. Convention. At this time we're trying to set our sights on 1975 as the target. Again we suggest you train those eyeballs on our upcoming reprints for further, more specific info.

In case you've been wanting to order a copy of the first E.C. Portfolio from our Graveyard Goodies department, but haven't done it yet, do so! It's been out-of-print for some time now, but we still have a handful of copies left.

Now that we've bored you again with our usual dribble, we turn you over to our rancid readers.

Gentlemen:

Very pleased with your production so far ... a great idea well executed. Surely that must make for some satisfaction as well as a few more dreams. The E.C.'s were an integral part of my young life when first I spotted them along with the then new MAD. Unfortunately, the comics controversy as well as the government's good-intentioned and foolishly managed concern over all of us, lest we become slightly red, saw fit to demand changes in the imaginative and the political as if we were beneath any real awareness of what was happening despite our "youth."

The repression of the fifties and subsequent moral excesses of the sixties all point to a rather over-careful attitude we still maintain to this day regarding the "education" of our youth. Alas, there will always be someone wanting to "help" and proceed to confuse assistance with meddling. We will always be enormously indebted to the Gaines staff that they tempered their anger and grief with more subtle barbs in the form of the early MAD and related publications featuring that brand of humor that has recently been realized to have been the same approach in the face of government "help."

Sincerely,
Michael C. Gwynne
Los Angeles, California

Dear East Coast Comix

What! FIVE Dollars for only six comics? But do they look like the old E.C.'s when I was just a kid? Here hand me that CRYPT OF TERROR. Yes, yes ... very impressive, but I still feel that ... What's they you say—just try reading a story or two? Well, all right, but if this is any TRICK ... Hmm mumble mumble swish rustle rustle Grr, oh no he couldn't have,—mumble swish, yes yes, rustle, HE DID! mmm. NOT SO FAST I AIN'T THROUGH YET! mumble mmm mmm. drool, drool, rustle hnm, yes yee but ... GOOD LORD ... IT'S TRUE!! more! more! They really are, yes

HERE'S MY \$5. Send me six more E.C.'s. HURRY, MAN! Before I go into withdrawal symptoms.

Cheerfully
Ritchie Dean
Richmond, Ky

Gentlemen

GOOD LORD! EC has returned! You can go home again after all! Just read EC Reprints #1, 2, 4 and 5, and I'm having trouble climbing out of this 4-color time machine back into the 70's. I first read E.C.'s when they (and I) were young, they were a staple in my reading diet from approximately age 10 through 15.

Ballentine Books' black-and-white reprints 2 or 3 years ago of some of the stories were better than nothing, but just barely. The EC REPRINTS are a real, an good, perhaps better than the originals! Those garish ghoulish ghoulish covers. Ghastly, ghastly characters, the most beam-ish of BEM's—they're still as addictive as they were in the 50's. "Perhaps better because (1) they're still good stories and art, (2) with age and experience has come new knowledge and ways to appreciate them, and (3) the fantastic nostalgia-zap!"

When I ordered #s 1, 2, 4 and 5, I figured you were probably going to print 5 or 6 of them, grab a couple of quick EC-nostalgia bucks, and close up shop. Then I discovered, inside front cover of #1, that your awe-inspiring overall plan is to eventually reprint EVERY E.C. COMIC! (Gasp! Choke!) One-a-month will do, I guess; but one wishes you were far enough ahead of schedule to issue about one a week.

Suggestions for future reprints. (1) The "SHOCK SUSPENSORIES" (or "Crime Suspensories"?), about whose cover Mr. Gaines was quizzed at the Senate Hearing "There's blood coming from her mouth"—"A little."—Just to see that cover (again) would almost be worth the buck. (2), (3), (4)—Whichever issues of the horror mags presented Origin Stories on the Old Witch, Crypt Keeper, and Vault Keeper. (5). A Wally Wood sf story, featuring a little girl, product of atomic mutation—she was physically small and ugly, despised by her playmates; one night when "hiding something" in a tree, she fell to her death. It was a note reading, "Whoever finds this, I love you." They just don't write 'em like that anymore.

Questions on future reprints: I know you won't/can't do old MAD's, but how about PANIC? Also how about the short-lived "New Directions" mags, put out in a last-ditch effort to keep going without crime & horror? Things like PIRACY, and IMPACT, and probably a couple others?—I, for one, would like to see the "Tales of Terror" and "Weird Science-Fantasy" annuals reprinted, at anywhere near a reasonable price.

In the late (or middle?) 50's, I was thrilled to have a letter-to-editor printed in one of their "Picto-Fiction Magazines." I would be hardly less thrilled for you to use all or any part, of this one in an EC Reprint.

THANK YOU!
J.R. McHone
Charlotte, N.C.

GASP! CHOKES! Yes ... we do plan to reprint ALL the E.C. New Trend books as well as the NEW DIRECTIONS titles. No, we can't reprint the old MAD comics, but perhaps in the future we can get an issue of PANIC out. The main problem with PANIC is the fact that it could be regarded as a competitor to the current MAD. There are quite a few involved problems in the PANIC vs. MAD question which we hope to resolve sometime in the future, but at this point a PANIC reprint just isn't possible.

Send all correspondence to: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Box 1290
Great Neck, N.Y. 11023

THE OLD WITCH'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

HERE'S THE LATEST IN MY FAIRY TALE DEBUNKING CAMPAIGN, KIDDIES. THIS IS THE *REAL SCOOP*... THE *TRUE* FACTS BEHIND THE NAUSEATING NONSENSE THAT YOU'VE READ AS...

HANSEL and GRETEL!



Y'SEE, ACTUALLY, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE AND TWO KIDS *WEREN'T* SO BAD OFF. THEY *WEREN'T* SO POOR THAT THEY *COULDN'T* BUY FOOD LIKE IN THE VERSIONS YOU'VE READ. IN FACT, THE OLD MAN WAS DOING *ALL RIGHT*, WHAT WITH THE *HOUSING BOOM* AND THE *G.I.S* BACK FROM THE *CRUSADES*, THE *REAL* TROUBLE WAS...

GOOD LORD, WIFEY! THEM KIDS! THEY'RE EATING AGAIN!

THAT'S ALL THEY DO IS EAT! EAT, EAT, EAT! YOU'LL HAVE TO INCREASE MY ALLOWANCE. I JUST CAN'T MANAGE WITH THEM EATING LIKE THAT!

CHOMP... CHOMP... CHOMP... CHOMP...

STOP WITH THE 'INCREASE MY ALLOWANCE' ROUTINE! I'M HANDING OVER MY WHOLE PAY BAG NOW. WHY, I STILL OWE A FEW DUCATS ON MY NEW AXE. EVERY TIME THE COLLECTOR COMES, I GOT TO DUCAT....

... AND THERE'S AN INSTALLMENT DUE ON THE NEW WASH TUB. OH, WHAT WILL WE DO?

CHOMP... CHOMP WEAR DIRTY CLOTHES! CHOMP.

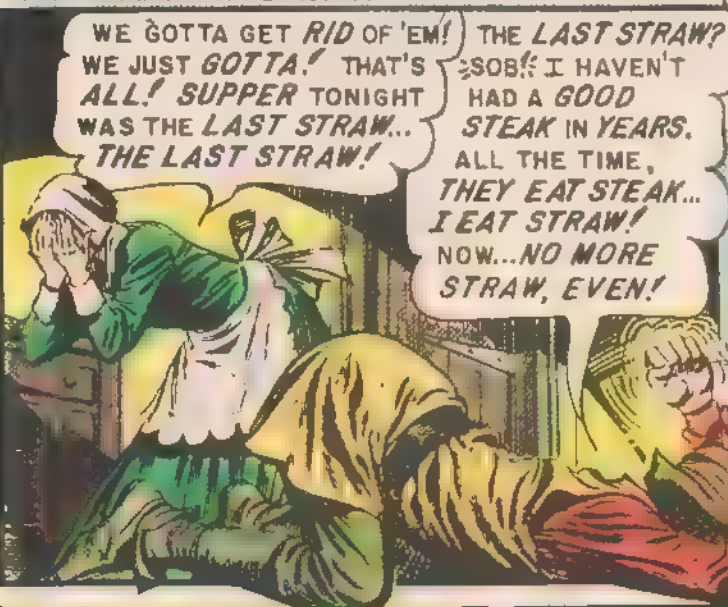
YOU SHUT UP AND EAT!

NO! DON'T EAT! TALK! DON'T EAT! TALK! SAY SOMETHING!

HANSEL! OUR PAR-ENTS SEEM TO BE IN DISAGREEMENT AS TO... CHOMP... WHAT OUR BEHAVIOR... SLURP... SHOULD BE!

CRABBY MIXED UP... CHOMP... PAR-ENTS!

GET THE PICTURE, KIDDIES? ACTUALLY THESE TWO BRATS WERE EATING THEIR FOLKS OUT OF HOUSE AND HOME... SO ONE NIGHT...



WE GOTTA GET RID OF 'EM! THE LAST STRAW? WE JUST GOTTA! THAT'S ALL! SUPPER TONIGHT WAS THE LAST STRAW... THE LAST STRAW!

SOB! I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD STEAK IN YEARS. ALL THE TIME, THEY EAT STEAK... I EAT STRAW! NOW...NO MORE STRAW, EVEN!

NOW, DON'T GET EXCITED... I GOT A SUGGESTION! WHAT SAY I TAKE 'EM OUT INTO THE WOODS AND DITCH 'EM? WE'D BE RID OF THEM! WE'D EAT AGAIN... REAL FOOD... MEAT... VEGETABLES YOGURT!

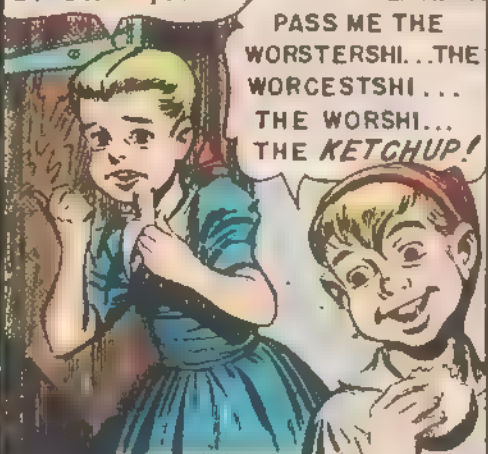
HUSBAND, DEAR! HOW COULD YOU? YOU SHOCK ME! I... I... WE'LL DO IT! MAYBE A TREE'LL FALL ON THEM... OR A WILD BEAST...

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FLIMSY WALL OF THEIR PRE-FAB WOODCUTTER'S CABIN, HANSEL AND GRETEL LISTENED...

CHOMP...CHOMP... D'YA HEAR THAT? THEY'RE GONNA DITCH US, HANS.

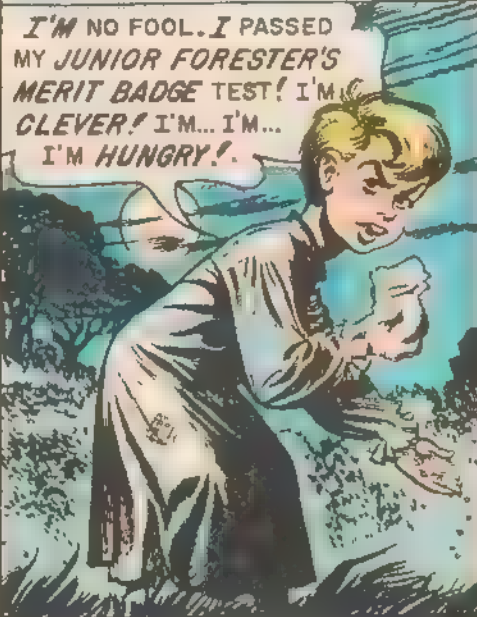
DON'T GET DISPEPSIA, SIS. I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING.

PASS ME THE WORSTERSHI...THE WORCESTSHI... THE WORSHI... THE KETCHUP!



LATER, WHEN EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP, HANSEL TIP-TOED OUTSIDE AND GATHERED UP SOME WHITE PEBBLES...

I'M NO FOOL. I PASSED MY JUNIOR FORESTER'S MERIT BADGE TEST! I'M CLEVER! I'M... I'M... I'M HUNGRY!



AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, WHEN THE WOODCUTTER LED THE CHILDREN INTO THE FOREST, HANSEL WAS READY...

COME, KIDDIES! FOLLOW ME! WE WILL GO DEEP INTO THE WOODS. WE WILL HAVE A PICNIC. WE WILL...

NOTICE, SISTER! AS WE PROCEED INTO THE IMPENETRA... THE IMPENET...THE... THE THICK FOREST, I KEEP DROPPING PEBBLES!



FINALLY, DEEP IN THE FOREST, THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...

WELL! THIS IS IT! THE FINISH! THE PAY-OFF! YOU TWO ARE THROUGH...DONE...WASHED UP! IT'S THE END OF THE LINE...

FATHER'S BEEN READING MICKEY SPILLANE!

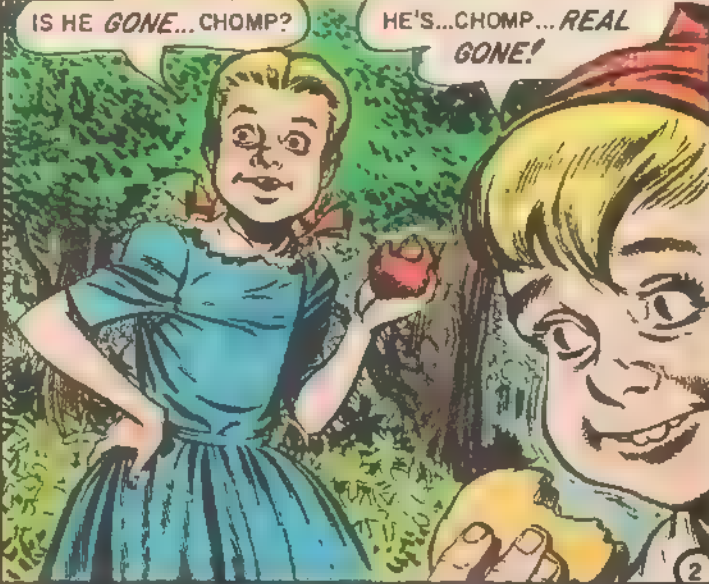
CHOMP... CHOMP... ME TOO! VA-VA-VOOM!



AND THEN, WITHOUT A WORD, THE WOODCUTTER DASHED OFF, LEAVING HIS TWO CHILDREN STRANDED...

IS HE GONE...CHOMP?

HE'S...CHOMP...REAL GONE!



LATER THAT NIGHT, WHEN THE MOON CAME UP AND THE SHINY PEBBLES THAT HANSEL HAD DROPPED GLITTERED LIKE NEWLY MINTED SUBWAY TOKENS, THE CHILDREN RETRACED THEIR STEPS.



WE'RE ALMOST HOME, HANSEL!

YES, I CAN HEAR THE WILD CHEERING AND HYSTERICAL LAUGHING!

THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE HAD JUST SAT DOWN TO THEIR FIRST SQUARE MEAL IN YEARS WHEN THE DOOR TO THEIR TINY COTTAGE SWUNG OPEN...



YUM! YUM! STEAK!

AND MASHED POTATOES! AND...

SURPRISE!



OH, NO! CHOKES!

MMMM! FOOD! WE'RE STARVED! PASS THE WORCESTERSHI... THE WORSTERSHI... THE WORSHTI... THE KETCHUP!

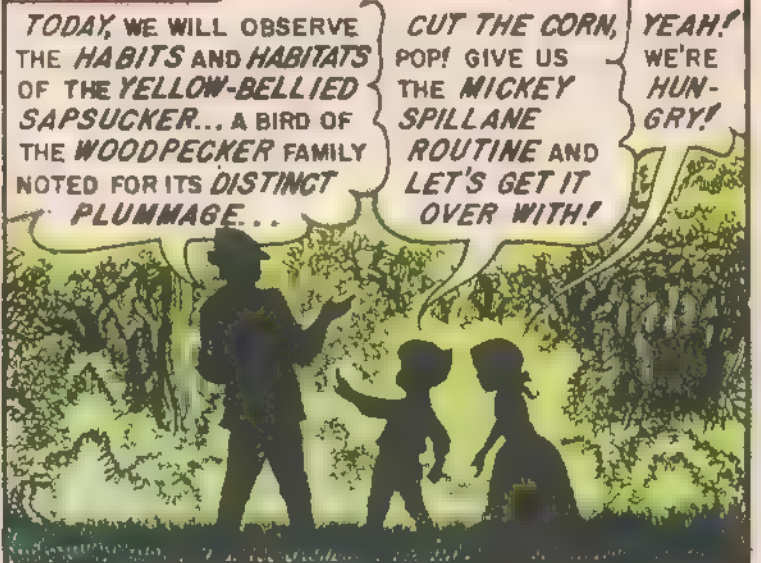
THAT NIGHT, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE PLOTTED...



WE'VE GOT TO TRY IT AGAIN, WIFEY! AND THIS TIME, WE'VE GOT TO DO THE JOB RIGHT.

OKAY! OKAY! NOW PASS ME THAT BONE. IT'S MY TURN TO GNAW ON IT!

AND SO, THE NEXT MORNING, THE WOODCUTTER AGAIN LED HIS DARLINGS INTO THE IMPENETRA...THE IMPENET... THE WOODS...

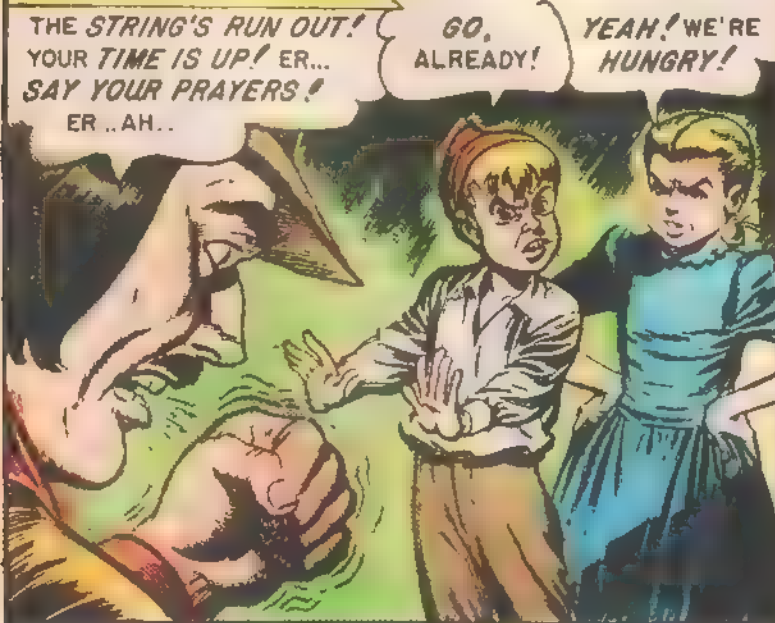


TODAY, WE WILL OBSERVE THE HABITS AND HABITATS OF THE YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER... A BIRD OF THE WOODPECKER FAMILY NOTED FOR ITS DISTINCT PLUMAGE...

CUT THE CORN, POP! GIVE US THE MICKEY SPILLANE ROUTINE AND LET'S GET IT OVER WITH!

YEAH! WE'RE HUNGRY!

THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...

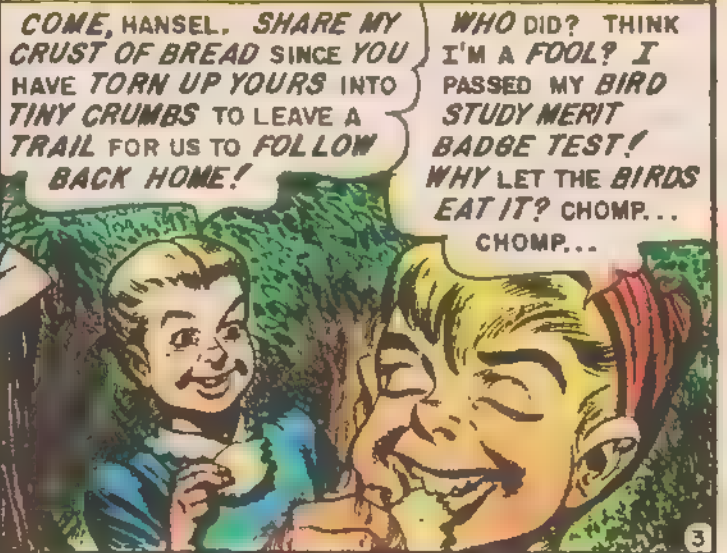


THE STRING'S RUN OUT! YOUR TIME IS UP! ER... SAY YOUR PRAYERS! ER... AH...

GO, ALREADY!

YEAH! WE'RE HUNGRY!

THE WOODCUTTER DASHED OFF LEAVING THE TWO CHILDREN DEEP IN THE FOREST... (HEH, HEH... THOUGHT I'D SAY IMPENETRA... IMPENETR... THICK, EH?)...



COME, HANSEL. SHARE MY CRUST OF BREAD SINCE YOU HAVE TORN UP YOURS INTO TINY CRUMBS TO LEAVE A TRAIL FOR US TO FOLLOW BACK HOME!

WHO DID? THINK I'M A FOOL? I PASSED MY BIRD STUDY MERIT BADGE TEST! WHY LET THE BIRDS EAT IT? CHOMP... CHOMP...

AND SO, HANSEL AND GRETEL WERE *REALLY* LOST THIS TIME. BUT DO YOU THINK THEY CARE? DO YOU THINK THEY WORRIED? YOU'RE DARN RIGHT THEY DID! AFTER ALL, IN A FEW HOURS, THEY GOT... YOU GUESSED IT...

...HUNGRY! I'M STARVED, HANSEL!

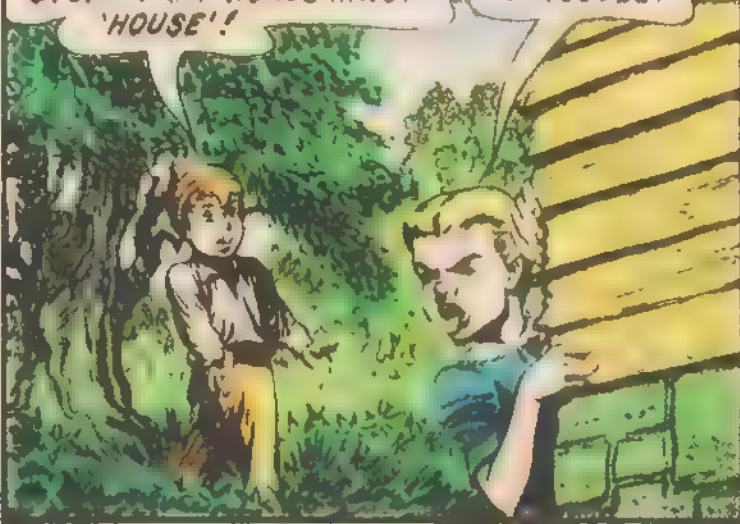
ME TOO! I COULD EAT A HORSE! I I LOOK!



IT STOOD BEFORE THEM IN THE CLEARING. THE TINY COTTAGE! GRETEL RAN TOWARD IT, Slobbering.

GRETEL! COME BACK! DON'T! STOP! I SAID 'HORSE'... NOT 'HOUSE'!

CHOMP...CHOMP P-TOOOEE!



Y'SEE, KIDDIES? Y'SEE HOW THE TRUTH CAN BE DISTORTED? THIS WASN'T ANY CANDY HOUSE LIKE IN THE VERSIONS YOU'VE READ. IT WAS A *GOOD SUBSTANTIAL* BRICK, FIELDSTONE, AND CLAPBOARD COTTAGE... (WITH FOUR ROOMS AND ONE AND ONE-HALF BATHS... SIXTY BY A HUNDRED... \$2,000 DOWN... BALANCE AT FIVE %, TWENTY YEARS... DEALS FOR G.I.'S!) ONLY 'CAUSE HANSEL SAID HE COULD EAT A HORSE... GRETEL MISUNDERSTOOD HIM.

SEE? HUH? SEE? HUH?



...SO NATURALLY THE LITTLE OLD PENSIONED WIDOW WHO LIVED THERE ASKED...

NIBBLING, NIBBLING. LIKE A MOUSE, WHO'S THAT NIBBLING AT MY HOUSE?

AW, SHUT UP, Y'OLD BAT!



I'M NOT KIDDING! SHE WAS NO WITCH! LISTEN! I OUGHT TO KNOW A WITCH WHEN I SEE ONE. THIS OLD LADY WAS A SWEET LITTLE OLD THING...

MY LAN' CHILDREN! ARE YOU HUNGRY? COME INSIDE...

GANG-ONE WAY! SIDE, Y'OLD BAG!



THIS LITTLE OLD LADY! KIND-HEARTED SOUL THAT SHE WAS, LISTENED TO HANSEL AND GRETEL'S STORY...

AND SINCE MAMA AND PAPA... CHOMP... COULDN'T AFFORD TO BUY US FOOD... THEY LEFT US IN THE WOODS TO DIE... CHOMP. BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE US... SLURP... SUFFER!

CHOMP... SOB... SOB! SAD, AIN'T IT? OH, YES!



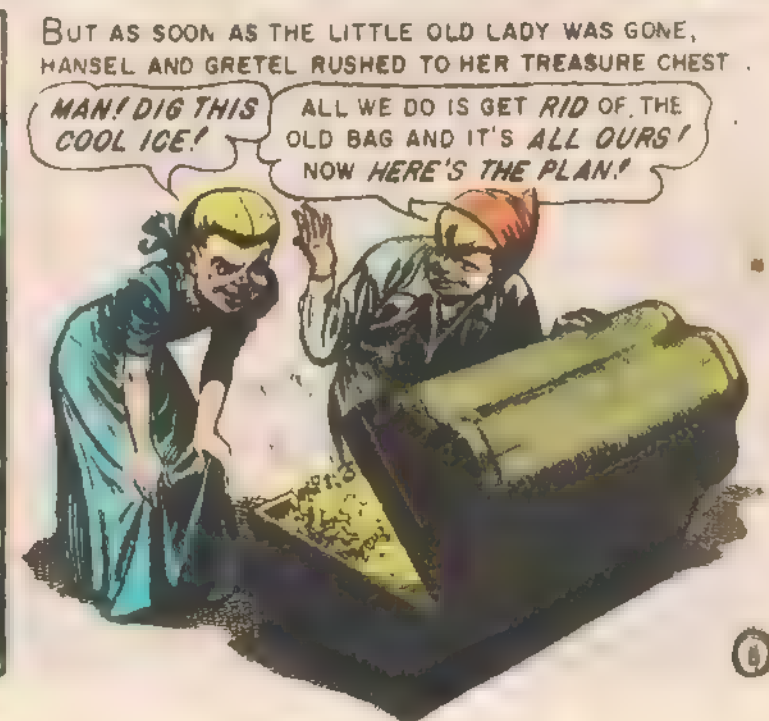
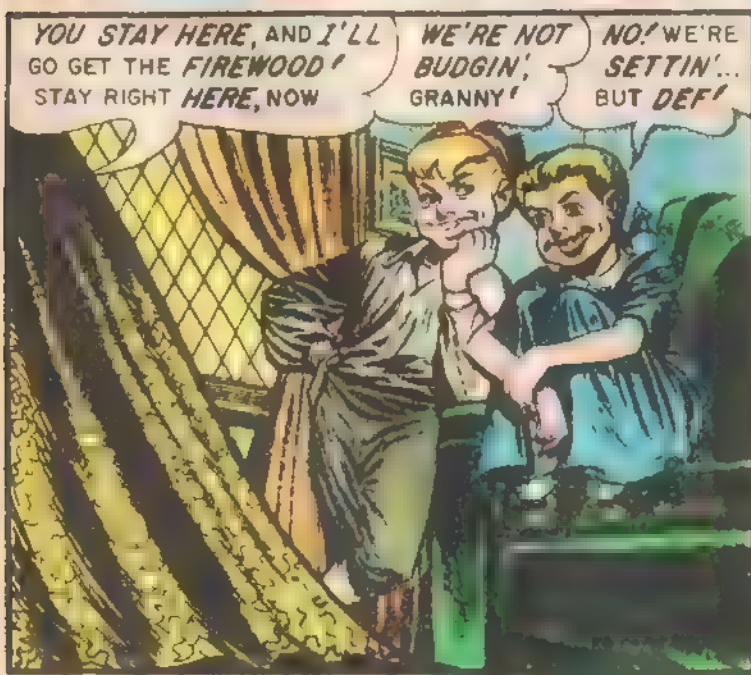
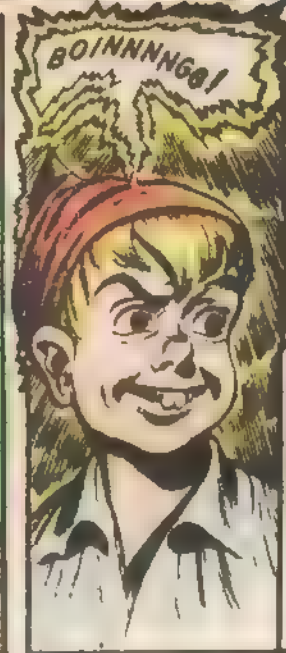
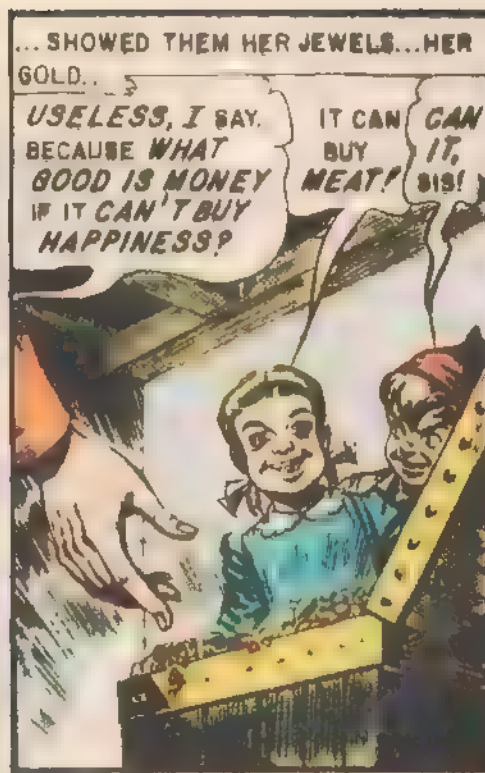
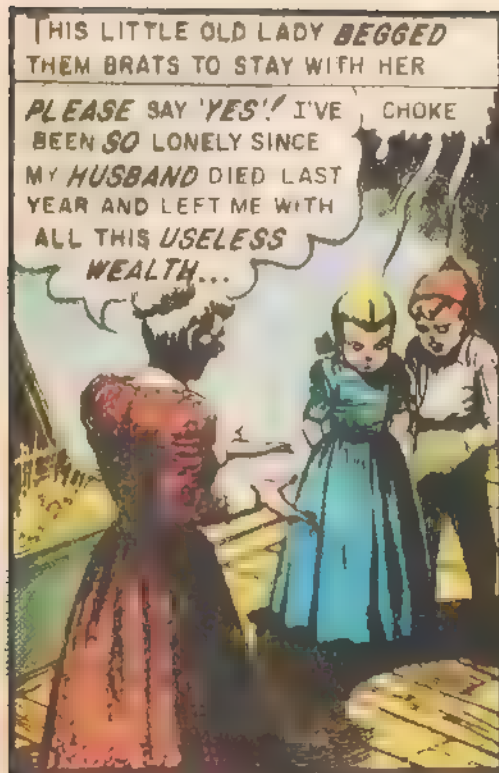
...AND FELL FOR IT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...

YOU TWO LITTLE DARLINGS CAN STAY HERE! I'LL FEED YOU! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! I'LL BUY YOU PRETTY CLOTHES... TOYS... CANDY. SODAS. MALTEDS..

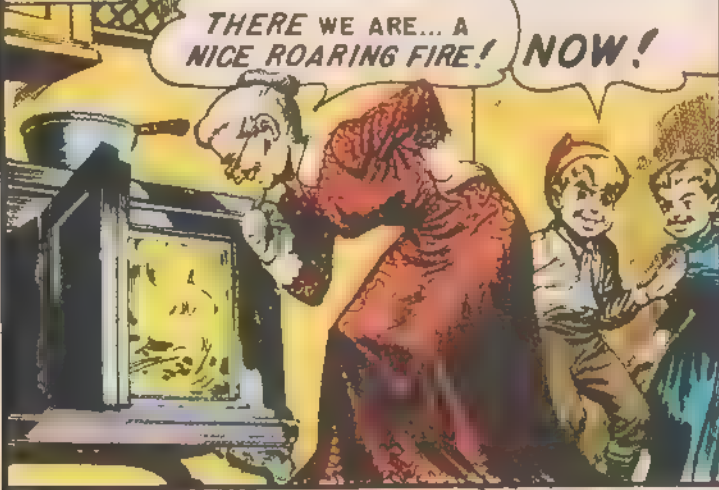
HANSEL! THIS OLD BAT MUST BE LOADED!

JUST SHUT UP AND PLAY ALONG!





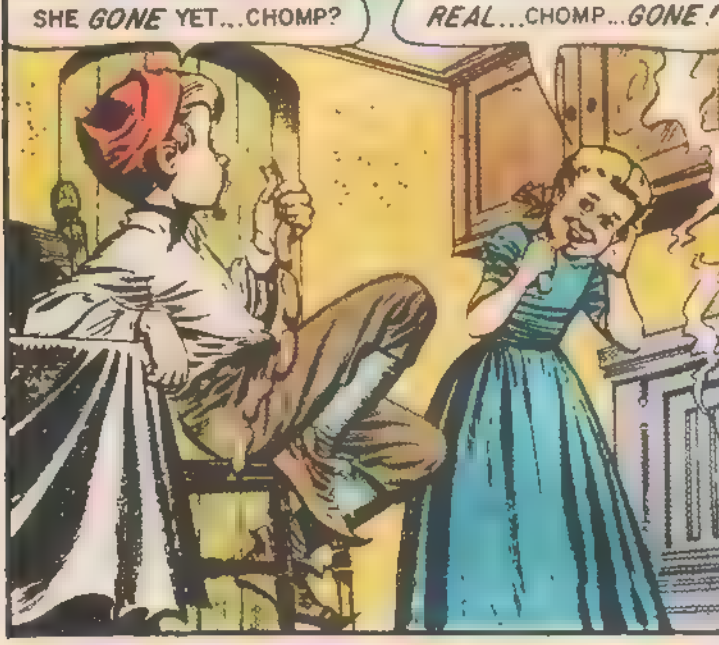
SO YOU SEE, KIDDIES, THIS LITTLE OLD LADY **WASN'T** GETTING READY TO **ROAST THE BRATS ALIVE!** ALL SHE WAS DOING WAS GETTING THE FIRE STARTED IN THE OVEN TO BAKE A **CAKE** IN CELEBRATION OF HANSEL AND GRETEL'S COMING TO LIVE WITH HER...



...WHEN HANSEL AND GRETEL PUSHED HER IN..



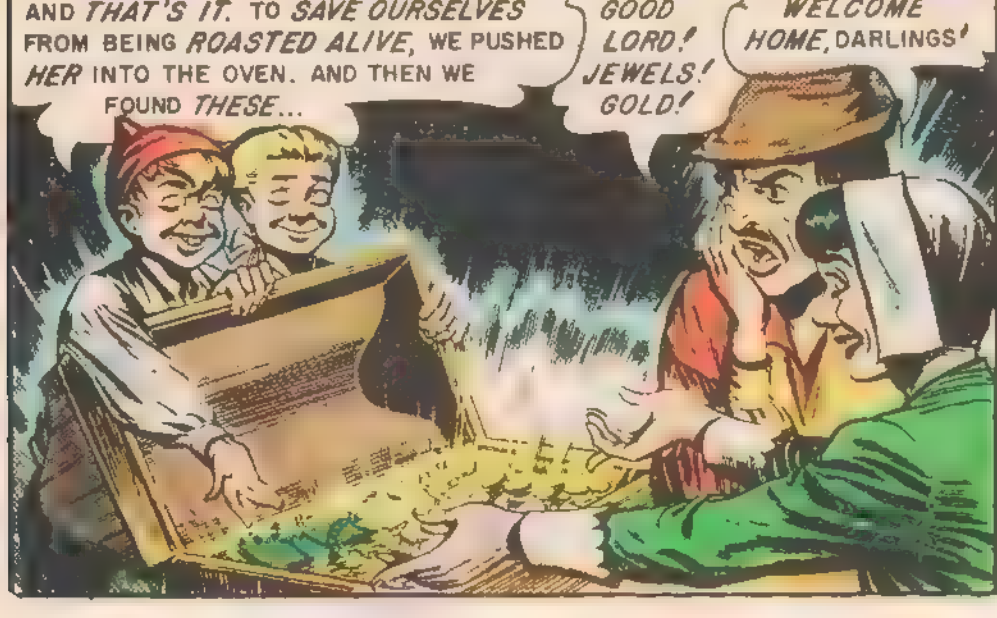
...AND LISTENED TO HER BURN TO A CRISP...



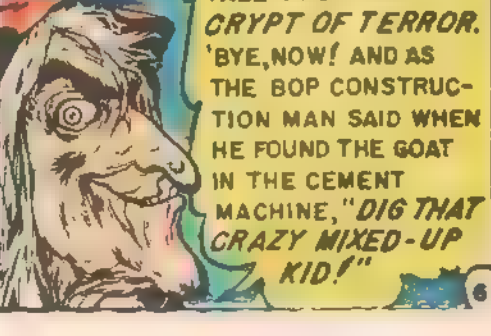
THEN THEY TOOK ALL OF THE POOR OLD LADY'S JEWELS...



AND WENT HOME TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER AND FATHER'S CABIN AND TOLD THEM THE FANTASTIC STORY THAT YOU'VE BELIEVED...



...BELIEVED UP TO NOW, THAT IS! NOW, OF COURSE, YOU KNOW THE TRUE STORY OF HANSEL AND GRETEL. GRIM, EH? WELL, THAT'S THE NAME OF THIS DEPARTMENT! NEXT TIME, I'LL TELL YOU... ER... WELL... LET'S JUST WAIT AND SEE WHAT MY IDIOT EDITORS DREAM UP. NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER WHO WILL WIND UP MY REEK RAG WITH A



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME, YOUR *CRYPT-KEEPER*, TO *WIND UP* THE OLD BAG'S MAG. SO, SINCE YOU'VE BEEN *TUCKED AWAY* WITH A LITTLE *FAIRY TALE*. . . PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A *NIGHTMARE* FROM *ME!* COME... COME WITH ME TO THE LAND OF THE *OKEFENOKEE*... SOUTH... *SOUTH* OF SOUTH. WHERE VARMINT PITS AGAINST MAN, AND ONLY THE WITTIEST SURVIVE. OUR HERO WILL BE THE WITTIEST, EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST HALF-SO. THIS TALE, I CALL. . .

COUNTRY CLUBBING!



FAR OFF, THE SWAMPS ECHOED WITH THE BLOOD-CURDLING YELPS OF BLOOD HOUNDS. FOR ON THIS DARK NIGHT, THE CHAIN GANG WAS SEARCHING FOR ONE ESCAPED CONVICT. . .



AS IF IN ANSWER TO HIS WILD, BREATHLESS BABBLING, A LIGHT BREAKS THROUGH THE DARKNESS...



A SHACK!
THEY'LL HAVE
FOOD!

I'LL KILL 'EM... KILL 'EM
DEAD! STUPID ROTTEN
PEOPLE OUGHTA BE DEAD
FER JUST LIVIN' IN THIS
SMELLY HOG SLOP!



THIS HERE CYPRESS STICK'LL
MAKE ME A GOOD CLUB!...
BEAT THEIR BRAINS OUT!
... BEAT 'EM OUT DEAD!



WOMAN!...



GIMME THET.



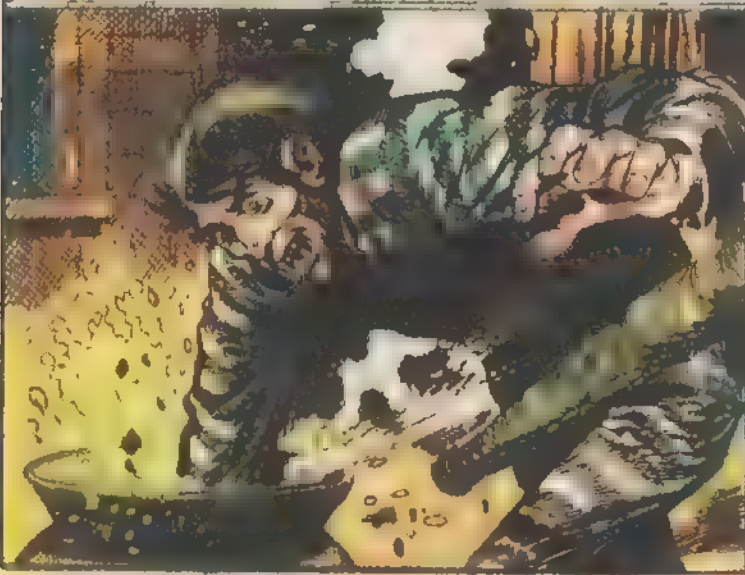
THERE, FOOD!



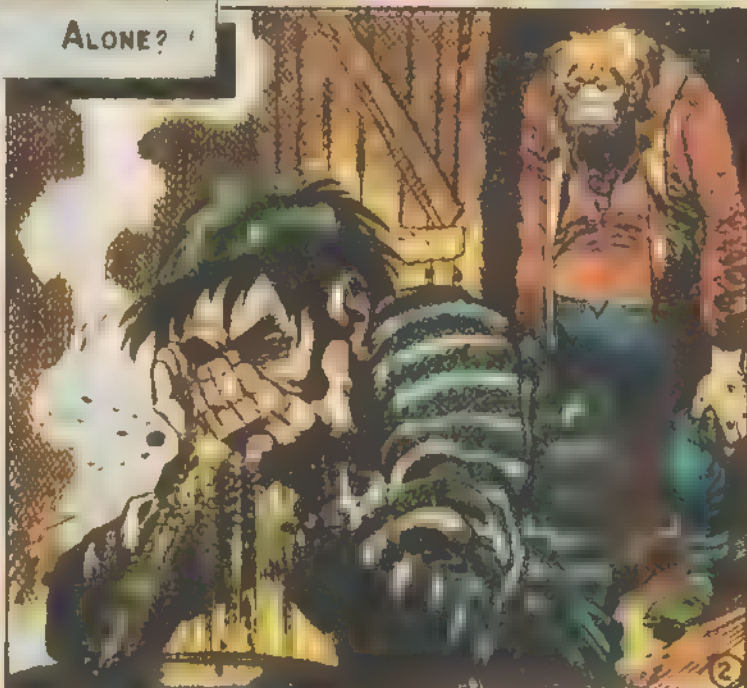
I'M HUNGRY!



THE CONVICT QUIVERED AND CONVULSED WITH THE
EXCITEMENT OF FOOD AT LAST! FOOD... ALL FOR
HIM AND NO ONE ELSE... HIM ALONE!



ALONE?



IT STOOD HUGE AND UGLY. IT WAS A MAN... THE DEAD WOMAN'S MAN. HIS FACE WOULD SCARE THE WITS OUT OF *ANY* STRIPED SKUNK...



...AND IT DID!



GIT AWAY! DON'T TOUCH ME! I... I DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT HER! I WUZ HUNGRY... HONEST!



OWWWW! HELP!



IT'S TH' DEVIL HISSELF! I AIN'T READY FER YA YET! YA GOTTA KETCH ME! LEMME OUTA HERE!



BACK OUT INTO THE DARKNESS AND THE SWAMPS HE RAN. EVEN THE HOUNDS WOULD BE BETTER FOR HIM THAN THIS GHOULISH-LOOKING MONSTER...

HEH! HEH! I CAN OUT-LEG HIM... THE STUMBLIN' IDIOT!

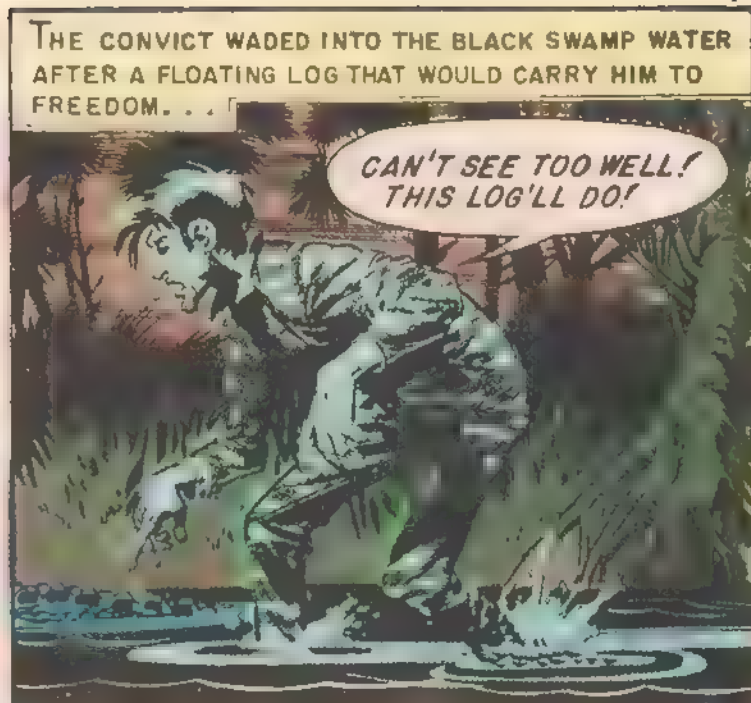
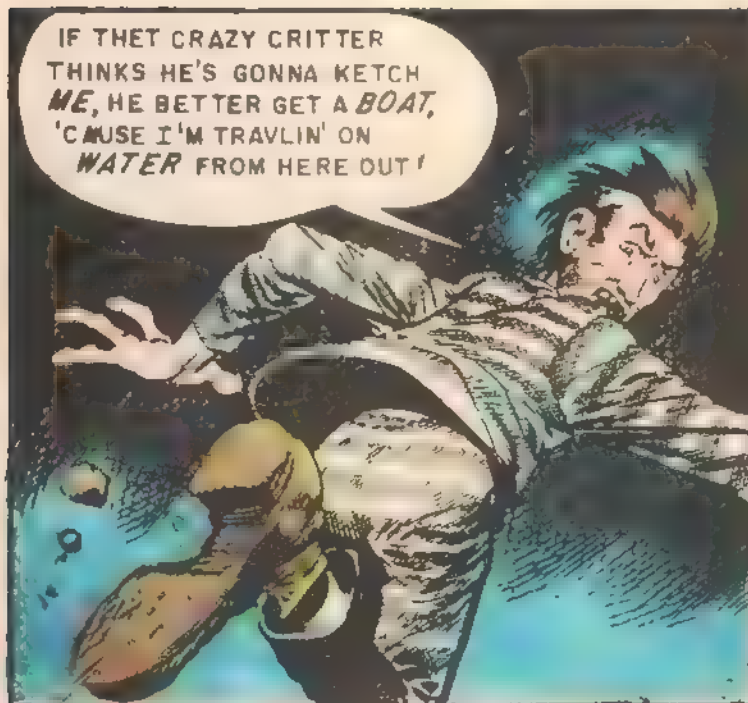


... YET HE STILL FOLLOWED... WITH THE CLUB!



HIS WILD RUNNING BROUGHT HIM BACK ONTO THE PATH OF THE BAYING BLOOD HOUNDS...THEIR THROATS SORE AND EAGER FOR A SWALLOW OF FLESH...





AS HE UNTANGLED HIMSELF FROM THE VINES THAT TWISTED AROUND HIS ARMS AND LEGS, ONE VINE BEGAN TO SLOWLY MOVE...



TRUE! IT *WAS* A SNAKE... A LONG, BROWN AND YELLOW COTTONMOUTH SNAKE. AND IT SANK ITS TEETH INTO THE CONVICT, EJECTING ITS STORED UP VENOM...



IN HIS FIT OF FEAR AND ANGER, HE BEAT THE REPTILE TO DEATH...



SUDDENLY, THE SWAMP ANSWERED BACK TO HIM WITH A WILD HUM OF GNATS AND MOSQUITOES...



...FOLLOWED BY PURSUING BATS, FLAPPING AND FRIGHTNING THE CONVICT DEEPER INTO THE SWAMP...



HE RAN WILD. FEAR, NOW, HAD CONTROL OF HIS CRIMINAL BRAIN. ONLY *INSTINCT* KEPT HIM FIGHTING TO ESCAPE THE MURDERED WOMAN'S MAN...



YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE *CLUB!*



THE OKEFENOCKE HAD NOW SAPPED ALL OF HIS ENERGY. HE COULDN'T GO ON. THIS WAS IT...



AND SO WE LEAVE OUR CONVICT FRIEND... JIBBERING AWAY... A RAVING MANIAC DEEP IN THE OKEFENOCKE. SOMETHING JUST... SHALL WE SAY... **SNAPPED**, WHEN THE **BIG SLOB** PRACTICED HIS **SOUTHERN OKEY HOSPITALITY**... WHICH IS: ALWAYS **RETURN THINGS THAT AIN'T RIGHTFULLY YOURS**. WELL THAT ABOUT WINDS UP O.W.'S MORBID MAG, WHICH *IS* RIGHTFULLY YOURS. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, **TALES FROM THE CRYPT!** OH, BY THE WAY, DID YOU FOR-

GET ABOUT THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB?** NO? HMMM! THAT'S **TOO BAD!** 'BYE, NOW... **E.C.**, THAT IS!



THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Hee, hee! I won! It's "that time of the year again"... so me and my idiot editors had a big battle. They wanted to cut my column to make room for the annual "who-owns-what" hogwash. But we finally decided to stick it on the text page. I threatened to cut off their supply of chlorophyll... the stinkers. They turned green! So now, without further ado, let's dig into the mail-bag and compile the latest additions to the E.C. Horror Hit Parade, as submitted by the following tetch-ed-tittle-twisters: R. and B. Richie of Chicago, Ill.; Carole Jean Peck of Three Rivers, Mass.; Leonard E. Eckert of Marysville, Calif.; Hiliare Bopray of Green Bay, Wis.; Jerry Granozio of Corning, N. Y.; Jerry Hanna of New Castle, Pa.; Michael Fratanutano and Tom DeDeo of Newark, N. J.; Sally Hodges and friends of Fort Clayton, Canal Zone; and J. J. Spina of N. Y. C.:

DO NOT CREMATE ME, OH MY DARLING
I'VE GOT YOUR BLOOD TO KEEP ME WARM
I'LL BE DOWN TO EAT YOU IN A TAXI, YUMMY!
I SAW MOMMY EATING SANTA'S CLAWS
IT'S THE TALK OF THE TOMB
DON'T DRAIN ME
MY OLD KENTUCKY CRONE
HACK IN YOUR OWN BACK YARD
DON'T SPIT UNDER THE APPLE TREE
JUST ANOTHER CROAKER
THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR YOUR SON'S EYES
I DON'T CARE IF THE SUN DON'T SHINE
(I EAT MY LOVERS IN THE EVENIN' TIME)
CUT HER UP A LITTLE CLOSER
THRUST IN ME
I'M PUKING OVER THE FOUR STIFFS OF DOVER
DROWNED IN THE OLD BILGE STREAM
I WILL BREAK YOUR BACK 'AGAIN, KATHLEEN
SOMEBODY STOLE MY GUTS
A-CRUNCHING WE WILL GO
I'M SLITTING THE TOP OF A GIRL

Joe Malone of Brooklyn and Dan Voorhees of Los Angeles suggest the following vampire vocalists to warble the above disgusting ditties:

EDDIE SQUISHER
DINAH GORE
LES PALL-BEARER
MEL TORE-ME
ETHEL MURDER-MAN
ROSEMARY SLEW ME
BOIL EYES

Putrid Poetry Dept.: Sickly Sandy of Willow Grove, Pa. dashes off this one to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean":

PAIL, PLEASE

My stomach is in a commotion,
My head's hanging over the rail...
I don't want to mess up the ocean
So somebody bring me a pail!

Bobby McMahon of Decatur, Ill. pens this prize:

When a vampire goes out at night
He sure don't go out to fly a kite!
He goes out searching, and then he drains
And leaves his victim with empty veins!

or

Down in the valley, the valley so red
Hang your neck over and I'll cut off your head.

Stan Grossman of Detroit, Mich. sends us this parody:

Mary had a little lamb
It went with her to school
One day the lamb came home alone
It really was a ghoul!

John Chapin of Houston, Texas dreams up this delicious delight:

Blood and guts all over the street
And me without a spoon to eat.

And now for some missives from the not-so-artistic.

Dear Old Crone,

I and my friend have a boast to make. By the time this is printed, I will have 160 E.C.'s, and my friend will have 170. I think we have two of the largest collections of E.C. mags in the United States. If there are any people who have more, I would like to hear from them.

Norman Benedict
Matt Flynn
1413 Rosemary
Columbia, Mo.

This sounds like a trap.

Dear Old Witch,

It always seemed kind of strange that everytime anything happens in your books, somebody says, "Good Lord!" I thought it was kind of silly, but it seems that recently everyone's been saying it.

Paul Cummins
Salina, Kansas

Power of the press, Paul.

Dear Old Ugly,

Every month, I look forward to the story drawn by Ghastly Graham Ingels. I think he's swell because half his characters look like my relatives.

Mary Little
N. Y. C.

You poor lershlugginer kid.

And now for the advertising. (If ya ain't got any money, don't bother reading the rest of this lershlugginer column!) In case you didn't catch E.C.'s two 3-D magazines while they were languishing on the newsstands, the stockroom is now bulging with millions of copies for you unfortunate people who missed them! And have my idiot editors got an offer for YOU! You can now obtain THREE DIMENSIONAL EC CLASSICS (original newsstand price: 25c) or THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR (ditto) for the absurd price of 15c each... or the special combined price of 2 for 30c. This is 3-D like you never saw 3-D before... or since! Subscriptions (in 2-D) for the HAUNT OF FEAR will lower your financial worth by one buck for eight flat issues. The address for 3-D orders, subscription orders, and the other stuff like what you been sending in is:

The Old Witch
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N. Y. 12, N. Y.

ORIGINAL LETTERS PAGE

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If you've been finding it a bit difficult cooking something flesh and appealing for your famished fright family and have been looking for something special to spice up your next lurid literary luncheon, then we suggest you shiver-chefs subscribe to our next batch of E.C. fiction.

Within each and every issue you'll find four tasty terror treats to keep those hungry horror hounds at bay! You can be sure that their every morbid mouthful will be garnished with a bit of the old E.C. gore.

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Featuring: "Three For The Money" by Kamen
"Dog Food" by Crandall
"Key Chain" by Krigstein
"The Squealer" by Evans



It's too bad you can't be here to get a whiff of the things that are brewing for our forthcoming feasts in fetid fiction, but you'll have to wait like all the other starved subscribers.

So..., if you can't stand the thought of missing a single rancid recipe from the E.C. cauldron, then tighten up that burial bib, wipe off those drops of drool, and send in today.

- Classic Reprint No. 7— **THE VAULT OF HORROR No. 26**
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"No Silver Atoll" by Evans
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